

Arafat embarks on tour before signing deal

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat will visit Amman, Tunis, Paris and London before a ceremony in Washington on Thursday to sign an agreement extending self-rule on the West Bank, officials said. He will then stop over in Madrid to meet Spanish leaders on his way home for the White House event, said Tayeb Abdul Rahim, general secretary of the Palestinian National Authority. Mr. Arafat was to go to Amman on Monday to inform the Jordanian leadership of the agreement struck with Israel before returning to Gaza for a "cabinet" meeting to approve the deal. On Tuesday he will fly to Tunis to chair a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee which will review the agreement. The next day Mr. Arafat will be in Paris, where his wife and first child are staying, followed by London. He will join President Bill Clinton, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Hussein at the White House.

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ROYAL JORDANIAN

YOUR WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Israel, PLO initial self-rule agreement

Both sides voice satisfaction over accord worked out after tortuous negotiations

Rabin, Arafat to sign document at White House on Thursday

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) concurred and finalized Sunday a landmark agreement to give the Palestinians autonomy on the West Bank for the first time in history.

After 18 months of tortuous negotiations Palestinian Economy Minister

Ahmad Qouriea and chief Israeli negotiator Uri Savir put their initials on the draft at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba.

"For this we have spent all these nights and days, look how many papers," said a smiling PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, holding up the agreement.

"I wish the Israeli people

happy (Jewish) new year. We will try to make it a year of peace, for our future and our children."

The agreement opens a new chapter for the Palestinian people so we can live in peace, in freedom, on our land."

He was sitting next to

(Continued on page 7)

Hold your nose here comes man who doesn't bathe

LONDON (UPI) — It

sounds like a device to do business, but if Newton wants his customers to know he doesn't bathe, although a bit of the pretty hot under the chief executive Yorkshires. Water wants them to the shower and tub as Yorkshire Water's out of water because

drought in the

England, and Mr. Ne

is threatening to cut

supplies every other

the reservoirs don't

filling up soon. "I al

haven't had a

shower for three months,

the executive de

this week. Mr. Ne

said he keeps his

up to snuff by us

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He's trying to le

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Yorkshire water

spokesman John

said with some re

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Everybody would fol

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24 hours of no

About 180,000 water

towers, or 180,000 pe

would endure the cold

Tutu urges eas

abortion rules

KIMBERLEY — Arch

Africa (UPI) — Arch

Tutu urged the

Church to support

changes making it

easier for women in

Africa. "I would hope

the woman seeking

an abortion, if it's

just a personal and

individual matter."

Mr. Silajdzic said

the hard line despite

peace talks due in

New York on Tuesday be

tween the foreign ministers of

Bosnia, Croatia and rump

Yugoslavia and U.S. and

European Union mediators.

The United Nations and

key Western powers have de

manded an end to this

month's Muslim-Croat offens

ive which has captured 4,000

square kilometres of land from the Bosnian Serbs, red-

Combined agency dispatches

JORDAN LED the international community on Sunday to praise the accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on extending Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank, saying it would contribute to peace in the Middle East.

The King "intervened

three times" to unlock the

talks, the official added.

U.S. President Bill Clinton

hailed the Israel-PLO agree

ment as a "good omen" for

future peace in the Middle

East.

Mr. Clinton said he will host the signing ceremony of the agreement Thursday at the White House.

At Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, outside Washington, Mr. Clinton said: "This is a big step on the road to a just and lasting

PLO leader Yasser Arafat kept King Hussein informed of developments during the

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan welcomes this positive development which can only reinforce peace in the region," a senior Foreign Ministry official told AFP.

King Hussein is expected

to attend the accord's signing ceremony in Washington on Thursday.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat

kept King Hussein informed of developments during the

(Continued on page 7)

eight days of intense negotiations in Taba, Egypt, which ended with an agreement on Sunday, the official said.

The King "intervened

three times" to unlock the

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(Continued on page 7)

Jordan, U.S. and Europeans hail breakthrough



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday sees off His Majesty King Hussein who left Amman for France en route to the United States (Petra photo)

King delivers Strasbourg address today, will attend Israel-PLO signing in U.S.

By Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

THEIR MAJESTIES King Hussein and Queen Noor arrived in Nice on Sunday on a brief visit to France where the King is scheduled to address the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg before proceeding to the U.S. for talks with American leaders and World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the King's address in Strasbourg will deal with the latest developments in the Middle East, progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process and prospects for regional economic development to be launched at the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit to be held in Amman in October.

It was not immediately known whether the King would meet with French President Jacques Chirac or any other senior member of the French government while in France.

In Washington, the King is expected to meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the Middle East peace process, the MENA summit

and the latest developments in the region, including the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of two high-ranking Iraqi officials.

Several other members of the Council of Ministers are expected to join the King in Washington for talks with key American officials from the State, Treasury and Commerce departments on Jordanian-American relations. The ministers will also attend a round of talks grouping the multilateral working groups of the Middle East peace process ahead of the MENA summit.

Finance Minister Basel Jarrah will sign an agreement with the United States on the cancellation of more than \$400 million in Jordanian debts to the U.S.

The performance of the Jordanian economy will be the key theme for discussions between Jordanian officials and World Bank experts. One of the key subjects is also expected to be means for the quick reimbursement of \$200 million that Japan has pledged to Jordan as non-project loans in concert with

(Continued on page 7)

Rabin: Palestinian state not ruled out

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in interviews published on Sunday, would not rule out a possible future Palestinian state.

Asked by the newspaper Yedioth Achronot whether he still opposed a Palestinian state, Mr. Rabin replied: "Now I am opposed. I stress the word 'now.' In the future we will seek all sorts of solutions."

In a separate interview with the newspaper Maariv, Mr. Rabin said he saw as a goal "a Palestinian entity separate from us, in significant parts of (the West Bank) and Gaza, that lives beside the state of Israel."

While complementing Foreign Minister Shimon Peres for his "bright" ideas, Mr. Rabin nonetheless said Israel should avoid talking about the "new Middle East" to Arabs, and thereby avoid their "paranoid" fear that Israel seeks regional economic domination.

Instead, Israel should seek pragmatic economic cooperation with the Arabs on a case by case basis, he said.

Mr. Rabin said a U.S. plan whereby countries would commit to a so-called nuclear "cutoff" — freezing production of fissionable material for military purposes — is not "practical."

"I urge restraint on those who want to risk the Bundeswehr in a peacekeeping force with troops stationed in Bosnia, because our soldiers would be exposed to incalculable risks and would become targets for terrorism," he told the National Religious Party's daily.

In an interview in the Jerusalem Post to mark the Jewish new year, which started at sundown Sunday, Mr. Rabin stressed that Israel would not return to its borders before the 1967 war.

Mr. Rabin intends to keep hold of parts of the Jordan Valley, a wide belt of land around Jerusalem and some West Bank heights overlooking the coastal plain.

"The agreement brings us closer to our basic goal — to separate us from the Palestinian entity and not dominate it any longer," Mr. Rabin told journalists after the initialising of the accord in Taba.

"The two main issues for us are, first not to return to the pre-1967 war lines and (to keep) a united Jerusalem

only that he will accept parliament's decision, but he has ignored calls to respect the existing constitution and withdraw.

Potential challengers, aware that Lebanon's presidential elections are traditionally decided by foreign powers, have refrained from announcing before Syria makes its wishes clear.

Commentators say Syrian President Hafez Al Assad usually waits to the last minute before revealing his hand.

The frustration of many Lebanese was expressed by Issa Ghosseib, editor of the French-language daily L'Orient-le Jour, who called the election run-up a "dance of zombies" whose political programme is limited to getting adopted by the sublime porte.

"People all over the world choose their president... but as if they are ignorant or handicapped, the Lebanese people are not allowed to choose their ruler or express their opinion," complained the opposition newspaper Al Diyar.

The Maronite Bishops Council protested that the election was being handled "as if... the president of the Lebanese republic will come to serve the interests of non-Lebanese before those of Lebanese."

The election "should be dealt with by Lebanese and no one else," the bishops said.

Mr. Hrawi has not declared his candidacy, saying

Talibans put off assault on Kabul

MAIDAN SHAHR, Afghanistan (AP) — An opposition Taliban commander backed down Sunday from an earlier threat to attack the Afghan capital, saying he wanted to give civilians more time to take cover before the fighting begins.

Meanwhile, the United Nations special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri returned to Kabul Sunday to try to get the two sides to sign a ceasefire agreement, something they have been resisting.

Taliban commander Abdul Qayyum's offer of a reprieve for residents of Kabul came amid heavy aerial bombardment and rocket fire from government positions less than five kilometres away.

Despite the bombing, an almost daily ritual, Mr. Qayyum said his gunmen still were ready and willing to launch an offensive on Kabul, but said the fight would not begin Monday as threatened last week.

However, he did not say when it would begin.

"When we gave the ultimatum some civilians from Kabul came to us and asked us to give them more time to leave," Mr. Qayyum told the Associated Press.

"We don't want to inflict civilian injuries," he said.

But people in Kabul say that is impossible. There are still 750,000 people living in the capital, badly damaged by more than two years of savage factional fighting.

Since insurgents threw out the communists from power in 1992, an estimated 25,000 people — mostly civilians — have been killed in successive battles for control of the key central province of Ghor.

Taliban fighters, however,

deny Mr. Qayyam's claim of victory in Ghor, instead

saying only sporadic fighting has been reported in the region.

"Yesterday I came from Ghor," Mr. Qayyam said.

"There is no government there. Taliban forces are in full control of the province."

With both sides claiming to control Ghor the only thing that could be confirmed was that fighting in the region was taking place.

The Talibans, a religiously-driven militia force, led by Islamic students, stormed into the Afghan battlefield late last year, capturing about a third of the country.

Earlier this month the Talibans stunned Mr. Qayyam's government forces by capturing the strategic western city of Herat and neighbouring Shindand air force base.

Libyans reportedly offer aid to Aideed

NAIROBI (R) — A Mogadishu radio station loyal to one of Mohammad Farah Aideed's rivals reported at the weekend a visiting Libyan military delegation has offered military aid to the Somali warlord.

The radio station, monitored in Nairobi on Saturday, supports Aideed's opponent Osman Ali Hassan Atti. It quoted what it said were "reliable sources" for a report that the Libyan made the offer while on a secret visit to Somalia.

It gave no details of the promised military aid in its Somalia-language broadcast. General Aideed's own radio station in Mogadishu has made no reference to the report.

Gen. Aideed, the man who defied a U.S. manhunt during the international relief operation to save the Horn of Africa country from starvation, is known to have appealed to Arab states for support for his self-proclaimed "government."

A group of 21 foreigners working for U.N. and aid agencies in Baidoa was evacuated last week after being held under arrest by pro-Aideed forces when they took control of the town.

They said they had no knowledge of any Libyan visit.

The radio said the Libyans had visited the strategic town of Baidoa, 240 kilometres northwest of Mogadishu, after it fell to Gen. Aideed's forces last weekend. They told Gen. Aideed to attack the Digil and Mirifle clans near Baidoa and in Cyprus.

The delegation left Mogadishu at the weekend, it said.

Several of the clan in the Baidoa oppose Gen. Aideed, and could be expected to resist any move by his forces to extend their area of control, diplomats in East Africa said on Sunday.

So far no state has recognized Gen. Aideed's government."



DEAL IS MADE: Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres shake hands after the signing on Sunday of an agreement to expand Palestinian autonomy to the West Bank (AFP photo)

Ciller closer to minority government

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish Prime Minister-designate Tansu Ciller was due to wrap up talks with opposition leaders on Sunday and analysts say her aim is a minority government supported by a patchwork of small parties.

They believe her talks reveal a blueprint of a minority government to be supported by the right-wing Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and Bulent Ecevit's Democratic Left Party (DSP).

"Yesterday I came from Ghor," Mr. Qayyam said.

"There is no government there. Taliban forces are in full control of the province."

With both sides claiming to control Ghor the only thing that could be confirmed was that fighting in the region was taking place.

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columnist of centrist daily Milliyet newspaper, wrote in his column on Sunday.

"The consensus now could be between DYP, MHP and DSP."

Ms. Ciller is trying to avoid early elections on the grounds that it would disrupt Turkey's bid for customs union with the European Union, privatisation, Caspian oil pipeline talks and other economic reforms.

"The prime minister has a minority government in her mind," ANAP leader Mesut Yilmaz told reporters after meeting Ms. Ciller.

Ms. Ciller denies this.

"Turkey is making progress on many issues," Ms. Ciller told reporters after

meeting the leaders of five major parties.

Her attempt to lure MHP leader Alparslan Turkes and Bulent Ecevit — two experienced politicians standing at opposite ends of the political spectrum in their career spanning more than 35 years — to support her bid for power is seen as an important manoeuvre in Turkish politics.

Hasan Cemal, political analyst of Sabah newspaper, in his column on Sunday

headed "The Dance of Wolves in Politics," said: "We understand Ciller will continue the tactical battle for the government model in her mind with Turkes and Ecevit."

Iraqi Kurdish rivals said seeking Iranian mediation

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Rival Iraqi Kurdish leaders Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani sought Tehran's mediation in their long-running dispute during talks with Iranian leaders last week, an Iranian newspaper reported Sunday.

The English-language Iran News also accused the United States of having ulterior motives for sponsoring recent peace talks in Dublin between Mr. Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Mr. Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

The sole objective of the United States is to meddle in the affairs of the region, and above all, Washington wants to divide Iraq," Iran News said in an article carried by the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) and monitored in Cyprus.

War broke out between the two Iraqi Kurdish factions in March last year, mainly over disputes levied on oil trucked across the Turkish border in violation of U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The report could not be confirmed independently.

The PPK has been fighting the Turkish government since 1984 for a Kurdish homeland in the southeast of the country.

In clashes reported since Friday, six PKK rebels have been killed and six village guards armed by the Turkish government, and PPK rebels have kidnapped a senior priest on official.

a de-facto, autonomous Kurdish state since the end of the 1991 Gulf war under the protection of a U.S.-led air force.

Iran itself has a sizeable Kurdish minority which aspires to a homeland, but Tehran claims that its Kurds are better off than their kinmen in Iraq and Turkey.

In a separate development, a radio station loyal to Mr. Barzani said Saturday his Kurdish Democratic Party forces killed at least 40 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) soldiers, including a commander, in fighting overnight in northern Iraq.

In a report monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, the radio said the KDP attack was launched on a PKK base on the Gara mountain. Five PKK men were also captured.

The report could not be confirmed independently.

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PKK rebels killed a non-commissioned officer and four civilians and wounded another at a roadblock in central Turkey, the Turkish Anatolian agency reported on Sunday.

It said an unknown number of PKK rebels stopped a car after the nightfall on Saturday night near Zara town on the main highway between Sivas and Erzincan provinces.

It said they killed the five people in the car and sprayed another car with automatic guns when the driver refused to stop at the roadblock. One passenger in the car which escaped was wounded.

More than 18,000 people have been killed in the PPK's 11-year fight for autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

AMMAN: Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Police 621211/199
Fire Brigade 717101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 609800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage

AMMAN: Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality: Complaints 767111
Telephones: Information 767111
Al Asmaa pharmaceuticals 637055
Nairoj pharmaceuticals 623672
Al Salam pharmaceuticals 636730
Yacoub pharmaceuticals 644945
Slumsan pharmaceuticals 637660
Nairoj pharmaceuticals 623672
Najib pharmaceuticals 847632

IRBD: Dr. Fayed Al Qadi 121
Albadil Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

ZARQA: Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Qeesa Alia Int'l. Airport 06-53300
AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital 09314111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hussain Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amm 644281/6
Akich Maternity, J. Amm 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malha, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shunass 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 665131
University Hospital 665945
Al-Musseir Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic Abhdai 665127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muthaireen 77101/5
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 775112/6
Army, Marha 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602305/50
Amal Hospital 674155

The Arabic Center for Heart and Special Surgery 851999
ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09980560
Ibn Sina Hospital 09986752
Al Hitra Modern Hospital 09980900
IHM: Princess Basma Hospital 02275555
Great Catholic Hospital 02272275
Ibn Al Nafoes Hospital 02271700
AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital 09314111

Sudan assails IMF

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has turned into a political institution controlled by Western powers, led by the United States, Sudanese President Lieutenant-General Omar Al Bashir charged here before leaving Saturday night on a five-day state visit to China.

Gen. Bashir, whose trip is to focus on bilateral cooperation, especially trade, said his country was adopting a "self-reliance policy in overcoming its economic problems," which he said were "created by an undecided economic sieve."

"Sudan has relied on itself, taking the Chinese model in development and reconstruction as an example for application of the policy of self-reliance," Gen. Bashir said in the interview given to the Chinese news agency Xinhua, and published by newspapers here.

He said his country would carry out several projects through self-reliance and cooperation with "friends and brothers" and away from financial institutions which "are controlled by the West."

"The Western hegemony on the International Monetary Fund has made the fund switch from an economic to a political institution, he said, and dealing with it had to conform to the policies of the western powers led by the United States, which imposes an embargo on states refusing to follow the policies of the new world order."

He said his country would continue to rely on its own resources and to pay its IMF debts of \$1.7 billion, the fund, "on agitation by America," would not cooperate with Sudan.

He noted that China had offered Sudan economic assistance and contributed to several major projects in the country. China has built the friendship hall, a landmark in Khartoum, the friendship textile factory in Hasabis, about 150 kilometres southeast of Khartoum, a bridge on the Blue Nile in central Sudan and is presently building a bridge on the White Nile linking Khartoum to its twin town of Omdurman.

The visit is Gen. Bashir's second to China. His first was in 1992.

10 jobless jailed for protest in Morocco

RABAT (AP) — A Moroccan court sent 26 jobless people to prison for staging a protest against unemployment, local newspapers reported. The 26, four of them young women and all college graduates, tried to hold a sit-in outside the town hall in Al Jadida, south of Casablanca, Sept. 13, but were arrested. The Al Jadida court sentenced them to six-month prison terms without parole and fined each of them 3,000 dirhams (\$350) Thursday for disturbing the peace.

Israel arrests brother of Palestinian bomb expert

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli agents on Saturday arrested the brother of a Palestinian suspected of masterminding a series of suicide bombings, a televised report said. Mari Latif Ayyash, 26, was arrested in his home in the West Bank village of Rafat three days after his mother, Aysheh, was taken into custody, Israel's channel 2 said. Mrs. Ayyash's other son Yehia, nicknamed "The Engineer," tops Israel's most wanted list and has evaded capture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for more than a year. He is linked to the death of dozens of Israelis. The Engineer is thought to head the military wing of Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, in the West Bank. It was not immediately clear where Mari Latif Ayyash was being held and if charges had been brought against him. Mrs. Ayyash was being held for questioning.

10 children held for aiding militants

MINYA (AFP) — Ten children have been arrested in Egypt's troubled southern province of Minya on charges of running arms and food for Islamic militants, police said Sunday. Police said the children, aged between 11 and 14, carried food each day to militants hiding in sugar-cane fields or on hill-tops near villages in the Mallawi area. They also ferried arms and ammunition as well as instructions from leaders, they said. But the children had admitted in court only to supplying food to militants on the run. The suspects risk being sent to reform school.

Swissair Airbus narrowly averts disaster

TEL AVIV (AP) — A Swissair aborted take-off at the last moment from Israel's Ben Gurion airport after the hydraulic system failed on his Airbus carrying 190 passengers, an airport spokesman said Sunday. "Miraculously the pilot realized there was a serious technical problem as he was preparing to take off on Saturday," an airport spokesman said. "The breaking system was not working and he finally managed to bring the aircraft to a halt without damage with the forward landing gear against an embankment at the end of the runway." The passengers heading to Zurich were unharmed and transferred to other flights. An inquiry was opened into the reasons for the breakdown.

Nine killed in Iranian floods

NICOSIA (AP) — Nine tribesmen died Saturday in floods caused by torrential rain in western Iran, the official Islamic republic news agency reported. The agency did not say where exactly the floods took place, but its report was from the western city of Shah-e Kord.

UAE paper slams Libya over expulsions

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspaper on Sunday slammed the Libyan expulsion of Palestinians and said it contradicted Tripoli's stand of Arab nationalism and unity. Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's decision at the start of September to deport Palestinians would not achieve its stated objective of showing up the failure of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal, Al Khaleej said. "Resorting to expulsions will not achieve the stated political goal, which is to expose the Oslo, (self-rule) agreement... How could a few people (deportees) abort the agreement?" it asked.

bomb attacks
Exploded at bank
in this city of 12 million
two people have been
killed Saturday. Damaged a
window, said a police
spokesman. No one
is believed to be
killed in bank branch.
Kurdish guerrillas
are active in the city.

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Sent 26 jobs people
to unemployment, local
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ian bomb expert

In Saturday arrested the
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was carrying 190 passengers.
"Miraculous" technical problem a
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stands up for unity and
solidarity."

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"The cabinet discussed
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Home News

Bay'at Al Imam trial postponed indefinitely

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The trial of Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), a group accused of plotting terrorist attacks in Jordan was postponed Sunday because one of the three judges was sick. No new date was announced.

The group known as Bay'at Al Imam, consists of 13 men. Seven of them were captured before actually carrying out any attacks and were formally charged on Sept. 5 with sabotage.

The charge sheet against them includes illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials with the purpose of using them illegally.

During the opening session three weeks ago, the seven suspects disrupted the courtroom charging that they do not believe in the

court justice system and refused to stand in front of the tribunal.

Their outbursts forced presiding Judge Hafez Amin to ask the defendants to leave the courtroom after issuing them a warning.

The remaining six suspects, most of them under 30, were released on bail pending trial.

But when they failed to appear in court on Sept. 5, a new arrest warrant was issued by Judge Amin.

According to Israeli press reports recently, the same group, "Islamic Revival," were behind a recent infiltration across the northern Jordanian-Israeli borders.

All six defendants, part of a group called "Islamic Revival," were formally charged with illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials with the purpose of using them illegally.

Meanwhile, the prosecutor general forwarded the case against six people also accused of plotting sabotage in Jordan to the State Security Court.

Two of the infiltrators were shot dead and the third surrendered, Israeli reports said. There was no Jordanian confirmation of the Israeli reports. The prosecutor general did not include this incident in his charge sheet.

Trial opens in sexual harassment shooting

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The trial of a 25-year-old Kurnanji woman accused of killing a man who allegedly sexually harassed her began Sunday at the Criminal Court.

Hanan Adnan, a homemaker, is charged with shooting and killing Mousa Hussein on Sept. 1, 1993 in the backyard of her house in Ajloun, according to court documents.

She also faces one count of possessing an unlicensed weapon, the document said.

Ms. Adnan, who sought refuge at a neighbour's home after the alleged shooting incident, pleaded innocent to the charge of murder but guilty to charges of possessing an unlicensed weapon.

According to court documents, the victim met Ms. Adnan on Sept. 1, 1993, and expressed amorous intentions towards her.

Ms. Adnan, according to court documents, then told

the victim to make his intentions known at her father's house.

"If you really want me you can come to my father's house," the court document quoted Ms. Adnan as telling the man.

Later the same evening, the victim went to Ms. Adnan's house, the document said.

The document said Ms. Adnan then used her father's unlicensed gun to shoot the man.

During the one-hour trial, the court heard five witnesses, one of whom was 62-year-old Hussein Nouri, with whom Ms. Adnan sought refuge after committing the alleged crime.

"She (Ms. Adnan) entered my house scared and hysterical saying 'he wanted to ruin my reputation so I killed him,'" Mr. Nouri told the court.

Another witness, Mohammad Fureihat, who is also the village mukhtar (chief), told the court that he was called to Mr.

Both witnesses confirmed that the victim did not know the suspect and said he was due to leave for Finland two days after the incident occurred.

Presiding Judge Abdul Ruhman Tawfiq set Oct. 7 as the date for the next court session.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Panel prepares for King's birthday

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday evening chaired a cabinet meeting at which Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kababiti briefed the ministers on the outcome of the 104th meeting in Cairo of the Arab League Council. On Sunday Sharif Zeid chaired a meeting of the Higher Committee in charge of celebrations to review progress on activities planned to mark His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday on November 14. The committee, which is chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information Khaled Karaki, groups Chief of the Royal

Court Marwan Qasem, several ministers, senators and deputies as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and representatives of the private sector.

Envoy to U.N. presents credentials

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan's newly appointed permanent representative to the United Nations Hassan Abu Ne'meh on Sunday presented his credentials to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali in a meeting attended by Dr. Ghali's assistants and Jordan's Deputy ambassador to the U.N., Fouad Bataineh. Dr. Ghali commended His Majesty King Hussein's stands and support of the U.N.

SWISS CULTURAL WEEK

Exhibitions

Two photography exhibitions: "Swiss photographers since 1840 until today," and "Face to Face with Switzerland," at the RCC.

FRANCO-ARAB FILM FESTIVAL

French-Algerian film "Cheb" at the French Cultural Centre at 6.30pm.

French-Tunisian film "Silence of the Palace" (Arabic with subtitles in French) at the Concord cinema at 8.30pm.

FILM

"Henry and John" at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Arts, Gardens Street at 8.00pm.

EXHIBITIONS

Jordanian-Syrian-Turkish products at King Abdullah Gardens, Al Bassam Hall. Abstract artworks by Abdullah Tamimi entitled, "Colours of Peace," at the Royal Cultural Centre. Works by Hani Khaza'leh at the Goethe Institut, Jabal Amman. Ceramics by Dr. Mahmoud Saddiq and Daf' Al Mafiah at the Marriott Hotel. Works by Lamia Abdel Sahib and Samer Ousama entitled "Aux Sources Orientales de la Fontaine," at the French Cultural Centre.

* Paintings by Sudanese artists at Baladna Art Gallery.

* Beneath the Waves," photographs on Aqaba underwater life by Julia Reinhardt at The Gallery, Hotel InterContinental.

* Paintings by Palestinian artist Samira Badran at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

* Works by artist Ghazi 'Asayrah at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery.

* Paintings by Palestinian artist Samira Badran at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman.

DARAT AL FUNUN

* Graphic work by several artists and students in the South Gallery.

* Photography of Jordan, "Elements in Harmony" by Hala Hilmi Hodeib at the Blue House.

* Painted stone and steel, "Embargo Art" by Iraqi artist Nuha Al Radhi at the Garden of the Blue House.

* Early Morning Scribbles" by Lebanese artist Amin Al Bacha and Jordanian artist Rajwa Bint Ali and "Late Night Scribbles" by Amin Al Bacha and Jordanian artist Ali Bermame.

* Open Air Sculpture workshop.

* Ceramic shop at the Lower Garden.

* Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Central Gallery.

Regent urges end to Europe's cultural isolation of Muslims

Jordan Times, Monday, September 25, 1995

3



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday meets with President of the Inter-Faith Association at the European Union. Erna Hennicot-Schoepges (Petra photo)

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday called on Europeans to open up to the Islamic civilisation in order to end the isolation of Muslims in European societies and enable them to contribute to the enrichment of the western culture.

The Regent was speaking at a meeting with the President of the Inter-Faith Association at the European Union, Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, and an accompanying delegation.

A dialogue between the two faiths should concentrate on common values and efforts and should be geared towards erasing stereotypes and misconceptions which each side might have about the other, the Regent said.

Dialogue among cultures should be based on valuable and common concepts and should not be restricted to defending inherited beliefs, he added.

Ms. Hennicot-Schoepges, who is also Minister of Education and Culture in Luxembourg, paid tribute to the Regent for his efforts in promoting inter-faith dialogue and his active participation in seminars and conferences aimed at promoting understanding among the followers of different faiths.

She also paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein for his endeavours towards peace.

Discussions at the meeting, which was attended by Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies Director Kamal Salibi, covered the cooperation between the society and the institute in promoting inter-faith dialogue and the possible future cooperation between both sides of the Mediterranean.

Ms. Hennicot-Schoepges is accompanied by Dalil Boubakri, vice president of the Inter-Faith Association,

Camille Wendling, co-secretary of the Inter-Faith Association, and Professor Carlo Degli Abbati, member of the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg.

Meeting studies results, planning of rural development projects



Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif (second right) addresses the opening of a five-day meeting on rural development projects (Petra photo)

AMMAN (Petra) — Delegates from Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon Sunday opened a five-day meeting to discuss planning of rural development projects and appraisal of results, as well as to follow up on the implementation of future plans.

The delegates will also make a field trip to an integrated rural development project being carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture in northern Jordan.

The meeting, at the Jerusalem Hotel, is organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Centre for Agrarian Reform and Development in the Near East (CARDNE).

Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif announced during yesterday's meeting that the Ministry of Agriculture has started a new phase in the restructuring of the agricultural sector in Jordan. The ministry is adopting a

policy which best conforms and caters to the needs of changes and developments at the economic level to enable the agricultural sector to compete in foreign markets, the minister said.

Mr. Ben Tarif said the ministry is preparing a plan to follow up and evaluate the outcome of this policy

and its impact on the national economy and farmers.

The meeting is a timely one as the Near East is witnessing deep political, social and economic changes which require the adoption of follow up and evaluation systems for following up on the implementation

of projects and evaluating results.

The meeting is a timely one as the Near East is witnessing deep political, social and economic changes which require the adoption of follow up and evaluation systems for following up on the implementation

AOAD Abdul Hamid Kayed told the meeting that his organisation was giving attention to rural development and has been extending aid to countries of the region to enable farmers to increase their income by developing new techniques in agricultural methods.

Participating in the seminar will be members of Parliament, Passport Department officials and women with personal testimonies.

The JWU would like everything to be in order before the Parliament session which will convene in two months," said Ms. Khader.

Article 12 of the passport law states that Jordanian women and their children must obtain their husbands' or male guardians' approval in order to be issued a passport.

According to lawyer Asma Khader, director of JWU, the article is in direct contradiction to the Jordanian Constitution which grants women the right of movement without any conditions.

The JWU intends to

launch a campaign to press

lawmakers to repeal Article 12 and other laws which the union finds discriminatory.

The campaign will start on Oct. 15 with a seminar entitled "The Right of Movement and the Passport Law."

Participating in the seminar will be members of Parliament, Passport Department officials and women with personal testimonies.

The JWU would like everything to be in order before the Parliament session which will convene in two months," said Ms. Khader.

According to Ms. Khader, the JWU plans to spend the next four months working on the first in a series of drives to raise public awareness of inequities in existing laws pertaining to the rights of men and women and to lobby for changes to

positive signs of congenital abnormality.

With reference to the Civil Status Law, she said the JWU will work to having the law amended to "restrict polygamy and arbitrary divorce" and abolish the stipulation that a married woman must have her husband's permission to work.

The union will also seek amendments to pension and health insurance regulations so that husbands and children of working women are entitled to benefit from the woman's pension or health insurance during her lifetime and after her death.

The current regulations require that a woman pay into pension and health plans on an equal basis as male employees, said Ms. Khader.

But the woman employee is the only beneficiary; the current regulations do not extend the benefits to her

husband and children as they do to the wife and children of her male counterpart, Ms. Khader explained.

A protest, planned as part of the campaign, will be staged for an hour in front of the passport departments in Amman, Zarqa, Kerak, and Irbid simultaneously, according to Ms. Khader.

Although no date has yet been set for the protest, the women planning to participate in it will be dressed in black and will stand in silence in front of the government offices.

"The idea behind wearing black stemmed from the Beijing conference on women, where a group of Indian women, who called themselves 'Women in Black,' protested against their problems by carrying banners and standing in silence, dressed in black, in the streets," Ms. Khader said.

James Baker reportedly used nuclear bluff before Gulf War

WASHINGTON (R) — As the United States prepared for the Gulf War in 1991, then-Secretary of State James Baker used a nuclear bluff to deter Iraq from the use of chemical and biological weapons, according to excerpts from his book published in *Newsweek* magazine.

"If you go to war with the coalition, you will surely lose," Mr. Baker told Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, according to the excerpts made public Saturday.

"This will not be a war of attrition like you fought with Iran... We have the means to define how the battle will be fought and you do not."

In his book, *The Politics Of Diplomacy*, Mr. Baker

wrote that he then delivered a message that General Colin Powell had asked him to deliver:

"If the conflict involves your use of chemical or biological weapons against our forces, the American people will demand vengeance. We have the means to exact it... This is not a threat, it is a promise."

If there is any use of weapons like that," Mr. Baker's book continues, "Our objective won't just be the liberation of Kuwait, but the elimination of the current Iraqi regime, and anyone responsible for using those weapons would be held accountable."

The implication was a bluff, Mr. Baker relates, because President George Bush had decided that the

United States would not retaliate for the use of chemical weapons with its own chemical weapons or nuclear weapons.

Mr. Baker also writes that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein wrote a letter to Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani indicating that he planned to invade and conquer Saudi Arabia.

In the letter to Iran, Saddam referred to "our 840-kilometre seastock," a new frontier reaching from Iraq to the United Arab Emirates.

Other points in the excerpts in *Newsweek* included:

Mr. Baker offered to station American troops on Syria's Golan Heights, captured by Israel in the war of 1967, to guarantee the bor-

der between Israel and Syria if a peace treaty was negotiated.

In response to a request from then-President Mikhail Gorbachev, Mr. Baker helped the Soviet Union get a loan from Saudi Arabia. "The Saudis later came through with a very generous \$4 billion line of credit."

President Ronald Reagan's "foreign policy apparatus" was less effective than it should have been. "It was often a witches' brew of intrigue, elbows, egos and separate agendas... I can't remember any extended period of time when someone in the national security cluster wasn't at someone else's throat."



COCAINE GOES UP IN SMOKE: Peruvian police throw cocaine base into a fire in Lima. Some 6.5 tonnes of the base paste were destroyed, including 4 tonnes confiscated from a Bolivian plane at Lima Airport. The value of the paste was estimated by officials at \$160 million (AFP photo)

Bangladesh opposition ready for talks with government

U.N. Vienna conference set to curb use of landmines

VIENNA (R) — More than 400 children and adults are killed or maimed every week while playing with friends, planting crops or simply walking through the countryside.

Their deaths and injuries are caused by landmines set in conflicts that may be long over and the United Nations estimates the carnage will go on well into the next century even if governments act now to curb the use of the weapons.

The growing landmine crisis will be the focus of a U.N.-sponsored conference beginning in Vienna Monday to toughen existing international restrictions on the production, sale and use of landmines and other weapons which strike indiscriminately.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali in July called for a total ban on the production and use of land mines.

"We must eliminate landmines once and for all... We must ban their use. We must ban their production. We must destroy those that are stockpiled," he said.

But the U.N. chief was unlikely to get the full backing of delegates from the 49 countries which signed a 1980 treaty — the convention on certain conventional weapons — at the Vienna conference.

Other U.N. members have been invited as observers to the review conference which ends on Oct. 13.

The United Nations estimates there to be 110 million live land mines yet to be located in some 64 countries ranging from Angola, Mozambique, Cambodia and the former Yugoslavia.

Land mines have proliferated in conflicts across the globe largely due to the fact that they are easy to obtain, simple to use and, most often, undetectable. Furthermore, they are cheap — prices range from \$3 to \$30.

Leading producers and exporters of landmines include China, successor states of the former Soviet Union and Italy.

In March, Belgium became the first country to pass a law banning the production, export and use of landmines.

The United States has enacted a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines which runs until 1996.

But most Western nations attending the conference believe the time is not ripe to push for a complete ban.

"A total ban is our eventual goal but it's not a realistic goal at this conference," Michael Matheson, the head of the U.S. delegation, told Reuters.

Chechenya talks take break amid mistrust

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Demilitarisation negotiations took a one-day break in the Chechen capital Grozny Sunday amid continuing Chechen-Russian mistrust and two anti-Russian demonstrations.

Russian officials said the regular meeting of the Special Observer Commission, which is implementing an accord to disarm the Chechen rebels and withdraw most Russian troops, had taken a break so that the Chechens could organise a handover of heavy weapons.

"We need this break so that the Chechen side can prepare the handing over of heavy weapons and armoured vehicles," said a spokesman for the Russian military command in the breakaway Muslim republic.

"Both sides agreed to the break," he added. The talks were to resume Monday, Russian officials said.

The deputy head of the Chechen delegation, Khassan Abumuslimov, indicated that the rebels were not ready to hand over the big guns, citing mistrust of the Russians' intention to stick to their side of the accord.

The Chechen side is ready for a meeting today to discuss the handover of arms, but we will not accept disarmament without definite guarantees," he was quoted as saying by ITAR-TASS news agency.

Despite the ceasefire declared in mid-June, there are continuous guerrilla attacks on Russian posts and artillery and aerial bombardments by Russian forces on Chechen villages.

Two Russian Interior Ministry officers were badly wounded near the town of Gudermes overnight by rebel gunfire, a spokesman for the Russian command was quoted as saying by Interfax News Agency.

The Russian authorities rarely give numbers for Chechen casualties or information about their forces' shelling and bombing of rebel-held villages.

Pakistan police arrest 300 ethnic militants

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar said Sunday that at least 300 members of a militant ethnic group have been arrested in recent weeks and another 300 are being sought by police.

He has been charged in connection with several murders and kidnappings. He also has been found guilty in abscondia of conspiring to kidnap and sentence to 27 years imprisonment.

Mr. Hussein accuses Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government of fabricating the charges and refuses to return to Pakistan saying he wouldn't get a fair trial.

Switzerland divided over Europe as elections loom

GENEVA (AFP) — Less than a month away from general elections, Switzerland remained bitterly divided this weekend over membership of the European Union.

Pro- and anti-Europe rallies in the city of Zurich Saturday each attracted thousands of supporters, but the anti-Europe protest turned nasty as left-wing extremists tried to disrupt it.

The demonstration called by Christoph Blocher, leader of the right-wing faction in the Democratic Centre Union, one of four parties in Switzerland's ruling coalition, was applauded en route by thousands of sympathisers.

The demonstrators, carrying banners with slogans such as "no to Europe" and "the European Union will kill our farmers," heard Mr. Blocher defend Swiss sovereignty, claiming that a huge organisation like the European Union could not adapt to a small state such as Switzerland.

However police were forced to intervene with tear gas and baton charges as between 300 and 400 leftists hurled bricks and tried to storm barricades to get at the demonstration. About 20 people were arrested.

Meanwhile, a pro-Europe rally called by the Socialist Party to press for an "open and tolerant Switzerland" passed off without incident.

The outcome of the poll on Oct. 22 hinges on the European question. Although Swiss public opinion appears to be turning in favour of entry into Europe, a substantial proportion of the population — especially in the German-speaking countryside — is still opposed. In a referendum three years ago, the Swiss rejected entry into the European Economic Area as a prelude to joining the European Union.

The results obtained by Mr. Blocher's supporters in next month's poll will determine whether Switzerland is experiencing a move towards populism and nationalism, as has been the case in countries such as France, Belgium, Italy and Austria.

According to political analysts, Switzerland's problems lie in the fact that it is currently experiencing economic difficulties, due partly to the strength of the franc and partly to a four per cent unemployment rate — low compared to the rest of Europe but a new phenomenon here.

DHAKA (AP) — An opposition politician leading a campaign of street protests to unseat the government said Saturday she is prepared for a negotiated settlement of the dispute over fresh elections.

Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League party did not say whether the opposition will suspend its 18-month agitation. But she indicated at a news conference that the opposition will wait for a negotiated solution before starting a total showdown with the government on the streets.

Mrs. Hasina's party and its two allies, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-E-Islami party, want Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to resign and a neutral caretaker govern-

ment to hold fresh elections in the country.

The opposition lawmakers have resigned their seats in parliament.

In September, the opposition organised six general strikes that paralysed Bangladesh. At least six people were killed in clashes between rival political groups during the strikes.

More anti-government protests and rallies are planned next week.

"There is still time for the government to accept our demands. We don't want any bloodshed," Mrs. Hasina told reporters.

Previous talks between the rival political groups have failed.

Mrs. Zia has rejected the opposition demand but

offered to resign 30 days before the next elections due early next year. She is prepared to hand over to a lawmaker from her governing party.

Opposition parties accuse Mrs. Zia's government of corruption and incompetence.

Mrs. Zia says her government is legal as her ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party enjoys a majority in 330-member parliament.

The impasse has slowed the economy in Bangladesh, one of the world's poorest nations. Strikes have cost the country's economy nearly \$88 million a day in lost production and exports, according to an official estimate.

Ariane rocket launches satellite

EVRY, France (R) — Western Europe's 78th Ariane rocket roared into space late Saturday and placed a satellite into orbit for U.S. communications giant AT&T after a launch from Equatorial French Guiana.

The Ariane 421 rocket, equipped with two liquid strap-on boosters, blasted off at from the European Space Agency (ESA) launch centre in Kourou, French Guiana, on the northeast coast of South America at 9:06 p.m. local time (0006 GMT).

The rocket lit up a clear Equatorial night sky and was visible for more than two minutes on video monitors at the corporate headquarters of the Arianespace Company near Paris.

Originally scheduled for launch Friday, countdown was halted and the mission

delayed for 24 hours after a faulty telemetry unit above the rocket's third-stage was detected and replaced.

Twenty minutes after lift-off, the rocket released into orbit Telstar 402R a 7,500-pound (3.4 tonne) satellite built by Lockheed Martin Astro Space.

"What is important (about this mission) is that this satellite replaces Telstar 402 that was successfully launched over a year ago by an Ariane 421, but that mission was lost because of an unfortunate problem with the satellite," Herve Loiseau, a senior vice president for the Arianespace Company, told a pre-launch news conference.

Telstar 402 was the second in the fourth generation of the Telstar satellite series built by Lockheed Martin Astro Space.

Telstar 402 was delayed for the fourth time in the last five years. It was originally scheduled for launch in 1992 but was delayed due to a problem with the rocket's solid rocket boosters.

Telstar 402 will provide voice, video and data transmissions throughout North America, Mexico and the Caribbean for major broadcasters and leading syndicators.

U.S. space shuttles no longer deploy commercial satellites, a decision made in 1986 in the aftermath of the Challenger disaster that killed seven astronauts.

Buthelezi pledges loyalty to Zulu king

STANGER, South Africa (AP) — Zulu nationalist leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi Sunday pledged his loyalty to Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, his estranged nephew, more than a year after the monarch broke ties with him.

Mr. Buthelezi, in an unusually conciliatory speech at a rally commemorating the death of 18th century Zulu Emperor Shaka, said he would "do everything to preserve the Zulu throne."

"I revere His Majesty the King... He is my king and we shall serve him together in everything we are doing," Mr. Buthelezi said.

The rift between Mr. Buthelezi and King Goodwill, close allies for almost 20 years, has been the main feature of the political landscape in KwaZulu-Natal province, which is dominated by Mr. Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

During the apartheid years, the monarch was accused of being a puppet in the black homeland run by Mr. Buthelezi, often sharing the platform with him at rallies and cultural gatherings.

But soon after South Africa's April 1994 historic all-race elections, King Goodwill sacked Mr.

his demands for greater autonomy for KwaZulu-Natal, said he wanted King Goodwill to lead a new kingdom modelled on the nation built by Shaka who unified, mostly through violent conquest, all the tribes in this region.

"I am absolutely sure that in the end, His Majesty will reign in the Kingdom (of KwaZulu-Natal) which he will love and in which he will serve for all the days that will be allotted to him," Mr. Buthelezi said.

Despite heightened tension surrounding the Shaka Day celebrations, police spokesman Colonel Bala Naidoo told AFP Sunday that no serious incidents had been reported.

An average of 40 people die each weekend in KwaZulu-Natal in clashes between the ANC and IFP which have claimed 10,000 lives since 1985.

A group of about 2,000 IFP supporters, many of them armed, travelled to Stanger by train from the Durban township of Kwamashu earlier but no incidents were reported, Col. Naidoo said.

Mr. Buthelezi is due to address another Shaka's Day rally in the black township of Umlazi, just south of Durban, Monday.

Filipina, Indian lover to get 180 lashes

ABU DHABI (AFP) — An Islamic court has sentenced a Filipina maid and her Indian lover to 180 lashes of the whip each and ordered their deportation together with their illegitimate baby, newspapers said Sunday. The court in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, found the 24-year-old maid and the Indian, 30, guilty of having an illicit relationship, out of wedlock. The couple, who were not named, are to be deported with their baby after the punishment has been carried out.

Ban sought in Philippines on 'female' typhoons

MANILA (R) — A Philippine senator Sunday urged a ban on the use of women's names identifying typhoons, saying it gives a stereotyped picture of women as destructive. Ernesto Herrera said he had filed a bill requiring the weather bureau to find other means of naming cyclones. "The practice of giving weather disturbances feminine names might be based on the erroneous and decadent stereotyping of women as moody and whimsical and worse, unreliable or destructive," he said. The bureau has a list of about 80 Filipino names which it draws from to identify each of the average 19 typhoons that hit this cyclone-prone country every year. The two most recent cyclones, which triggered destructive mudflows from Pinatubo volcano, were called Luding and Ising. Local versions of their international namesakes Ryan and Polly. Bureau records said Filipinos learned the habit after World War II from U.S. Air Force forecasters who gave their wives and girlfriends the distinction of having storms named after them. An Australian weatherman, Clement Wragge, started the practice of naming typhoons in the late 19th century, the bureau said. He named typhoons after politicians who invited his ire, it said.

Dog survives 6 storey fall

WELLINGTON (AP) — A dog who fell six floors from a Wellington parking garage, plunging through the window of a car below, survived with only a broken toe, a broken jaw and four missing teeth, a report said. John, a two year old Staffordshire bull terrier-labrador cross earlier this week jumped from his owner's car and then over the wall of the parking garage, the Evening Post newspaper reported. Owner Howard Makun said: "The last thing I saw of him was his back legs going over the side of the building." He watched as his dog smashed through the rear window of a car on the ground floor of the parking garage. He said he took John, dazed and confused, to a vet who fixed up the damage.

Canadian-British film wins Golden Shell Award

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (AP) — The Canadian-British film *Margaret* directed by Mort Ranszen won the Golden Shell Award Saturday, the top prize of the 43rd San Sebastian Film Festival. Starring Helena Bonham Carter, Kate Nelligan, Clive Russell and Kenneth Welsh, the film tells the story of a love affair in a coal mining town in the 1940s that ends in tragedy. Mike Figgis won the Best Director Award for *Leaving Las Vegas*, and Nicolas Cage won the Best Actor Award for his work in the same film.

Filipina, Indian lover to get 180 lashes
ABU DHABI (AFP) — An Islamic court has sentenced a Filipina maid and her Indian lover to 180 lashes of the whip each and ordered their deportation together with their illegitimate baby, newspaper said Sunday. The court in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, found a 24-year-old maid and an Indian, 40, guilty of having an illicit relationship or of wedlock. The case was initiated after the maid's employer found her at home and admitted to having an affair. Al-Khalid reported. The couple, who were not named, are to be deported with their baby after punishment has been carried out.

Ban sought in Philippines on 'female' typhoons
MANILA (R) — Philippine senator Sang urged a ban on the naming of women's names identifying typhoons, saying it gives a stereotyped picture of women as delicate. Ernesto Herrera said he had filed a bill requiring the weather bureau to use other means of naming cyclones. "The practice of giving weather discrepancies feminine names might be based on the nervous and decadent stereotyping of women as weak and whimsical and unreliable or destructive," he said. The bureau lists about 50 female names which it draws to identify each average 10 typhoons but this cyclone country every year two most recent cycles which triggered destructive mudflows in Mindanao, which called Laing and big local versions of their international names like Ryan and Holly. But records and files learned the hub of World War II from U.S. Air Force veterans gave their wives and friends the distinctive having storms named after them. An Australian weatherman, Clive Wriggles, started the practice of naming typhoons in the late 19th century, he said. He has typhoons after political who invited his wife to name him.

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Opinion & Analysis

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

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Signs of new era

IT IS becoming increasingly obvious that Washington alone is calling the shots in the Bosnian conflict. U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke appears to be making all the decisions whether they are those which had to do with the resumption of aerial attacks on Serb positions or their interruption in a bid to advance the peace process between the warring groups in the former Yugoslavia. The minute the U.S. stepped in to play a role in the effort to end the fighting in Bosnia, the conflict began to witness the first signs of resolution. All previous efforts, whether by the U.N. Security Council or the European Union proved useless until the U.S. decided to intervene politically and militarily. This has become very obvious to all the concerned parties, including the Serbs who began to yield to U.S. military and political pressure and started to withdraw their heavy weapons from Sarajevo's exclusion zone.

The question that remains unanswered, however, is why U.S. President Bill Clinton took so long to move to resolve the problem in Bosnia. Some cynics suggest that President Clinton decided to wait so long for reelection purposes. The timing of the U.S. intervention after so many years of bloodshed in the conflict between the Bosnians, the Croats and the Serbs suggests that Washington may not have wished to intervene earlier for reasons of domestic nature. But there could be more credible, political and military factors that contributed to the belated U.S. intervention. It is just possible that Washington wanted to demonstrate that it is the only superpower and that the Europeans and the U.N. cannot really deliver much on this or any major conflict without the full participation of the U.S. As a matter of fact, the U.S. left the door wide open for the European states to clean up the mess in their own backyard but after more than three years, Western Europe proved the U.S.' point that it was unable to provide a workable peace formula in the Balkans.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i Sunday called on the Arab people to collect contributions like tents, blankets and food and to send them to the stranded Palestinians in the desert region near the Libyan-Egyptian border. Sultan Al Hattab said that the Palestinians who have been deported from Libya are exposed to heat during the day and the desert coldness at night and are in dire need of help. Only representatives of the Red Cross and UNRWA arrived at the scene to inspect the deported refugees needs for assistance. He said, an Israeli journalist also visited the Palestinians to write a report on the situation but no representatives of the Arab media or any other Arab organisation appeared on the scene over the past weeks, said the writer. He said it is true that the Libyans committed a crime against the Palestinians by evicting them from their homes and treating them in an inhuman manner, but it is the responsibility of the Arab countries to extend a helping hand to the stranded Palestinians. It is a shame for the Arab countries to see the Palestinian refugees neglected and stranded in this manner and it is ironic to see the number of refugee camps increasing instead of decreasing, said the writer. He was the world community's silence vis-a-vis this human tragedy and the Arab countries passive attitude towards the expelled Palestinians are shameful acts no less outrageous than the Libyan crime.

A WRITER in Al Dustour said that Amman Municipality is directing its attention only to Western Amman districts in preparing for the economic summit in Amman next month and is ignoring the central downtown areas. Mohammad Daoud said that the guests, including the journalists who will be covering the event, are likely to visit the downtown areas of the city where they would find pavements and streets in unsuitable conditions. The writer said that it is most likely that the visitors would like to visit the central shopping areas and the alleys and side streets and would like to talk to the Amman residents to sound out their views about political, social and economic issues, said the writer. The scores of journalists who will be covering the economic summit should carry the best image about Amman and the hospitality of its people and the cleanliness of its environment, continued the writer. Furthermore, he said, the residents of the eastern and other districts are also tax-payers and deserve services.

The dollar continues its roller-coaster ride

By Leheb Abdul Wahab

THE DRAMATIC plunge in the value of the U.S. dollar, as witnessed in the first half of the year vis-à-vis the Japanese yen and Deutsche mark, seems to be over, with a reverse pattern now firmly in place as the greenback reigns supreme.

The dollar has been the world's major reserve currency since World War II, meaning that other countries use it as a "means of payment" and hold it in their treasuries as a secure value. Respect for the dollar, has made it the linchpin of global finance, greatly enhanced American prestige and allowed the country to run up foreign debts and trading deficits that less powerful currencies could not sustain.

However, with foreign investors steadily dumping dollars to buy yen and marks during the past decade, the U.S. currency now accounts for only about 60 per cent of the world's reserve holdings down from 70 per cent in 1984. On the other hand, America's budget and trade deficit have flooded the world with printing-press dollars and as a result the simple mechanics of supply and demand continue to put pressure on the currency's international price. By running a huge trade deficit, America continues to flood the world with dollar-denominated debt to com-

pensate for its inability to pay its way. The money raised by such financing ends up paying for America's imports that exceed its exports, with an accumulated net \$600 billion of debt in non-American hands, the U.S. is by far the world's biggest borrower.

With the dollar falling steadily since the signing of the Plaza Accord on September 1985 — when industrial nations convening in New York agreed to reduce its value — both Japanese and German investors are believed to have lost more than \$300 billion on their American portfolios, notwithstanding the harm impinged on their exports, that a too strong currency could exert by simply pricing them out of international markets, choking as a result their domestic economies.

The German Central Bank's move to cut two of its key lending rates by late August 1995, came, therefore, as no surprise, reflecting concern by the Bundesbank — which the Bonn government has no control of its policies — that an excessively strong Deutsche mark was severely hurting the German economy.

The Bundesbank move was part of a rare event in global finance, when the world's three most powerful banks — the Fed, the Bank of Japan and the Bundesbank — joined in a concerted bout of dollar buying to bolster the dollar and

drive down the value of the yen and mark.

Officials at the Bundesbank decided to cut its discount rate to 3.5 per cent from 4 per cent and its Lombard rate to 5.5 per cent from 6 per cent. The "discount rate" is the lowest rate at which banks can borrow from the central bank to meet their short-term cash needs. The "Lombard rate" is a so-called punitive rate, the highest rate at which banks use only in emergencies and when they need excessive amounts of funding. The two rates form a floor and ceiling for short-term borrowing cost in Germany.

In a further development and amid growing fears that the Japanese economy is slipping into a recession, largely the result of a strong yen that has made its exporters unable to produce goods economically, forcing the "Hollowing-out" of its economy, i.e. the transfer of manufacturing from Japan to low-labour-costs areas with wage earners at home bearing a heavy brunt, the Bank of Japan sliced its key interest rate to the lowest level in the country's history. The Central Bank slashed its discount rate in early September 1995, by half a percentage point to 0.5 per cent, the lowest level ever in an industrial country, at least since the end of World War II.

Theoretically, lowering rates in Japan makes yen-denominated investments and deposits less attractive than dollar-based ones, thereby increasing demand for the U.S. dollar. The cut in interest rates was further coupled by the daily intervention of the Bank of Japan with purchases of dollars estimated at 400 million, as a consequence, the dollar exceeded the important psychological barrier of 100 yen, a 25 per cent rise from its spring low of less than 80 yen.

Indeed, the aim of the Central Bank of Japan's massive buying is to drive the dollar to a level where it triggers a "self-sustaining" flow of funds, in other words, where the money flowing out of Japan in the form of foreign investments equals about the amount of export revenue flowing in.

The fundamental problem lies with the "inflow," the enormous trade surplus running at close to \$130 billion a year.

Vexing, as that surplus is to Japan's trade partners, the export revenue inflows have been suffocating Japan driving the yen relentlessly higher and domestic economic growth inexorably lower. If left unchecked, the appreciation of the yen would ultimately price Japanese goods out of world markets and radically reduce the trade surplus, but at the same time it would wreck the domestic economy. The preferred solution is for Japan to import more, so that pay-

ments for goods and income from exports come close to balancing as they cross the foreign exchange market.

But that's a long-term solution, one that will require diligent administration work to make the country more open to imports. In the meantime outflows from Japan to purchase foreign securities would have the same effect as stepped-up imports of goods on the exchange market, creating demand for foreign currency to offset the demand for yen from Japanese exporters repatriating revenues.

The critical question now is whether the current weakness of the yen, engineered by the Bank of Japan through its huge interventions and repeated reductions in domestic interest rates, can convince Japanese investors that it is safe to resume buying foreign securities and that the yen is unlikely to substantially strengthen in the future. Even optimists agree that the answer is not likely to be known for some months. With the Japanese government second supplementary budget expected to be announced soon amidst anticipating that the government will present sizeable new spending plans to promptly boost production and demand, the dollar could trade in a range of 100-110 yen between now and year end, buoyed by both an acceleration of outflows into foreign

investment and an unwinding of currency hedges by Japanese exporters.

To sum up, it is in everybody's interest to have a higher dollar; Japan to get out of its recessionary spiral and Germany because its economy has turned out more sluggish than the Bundesbank thought. The dollar could, therefore, end the year cruising between 100 and 110 yen and 1.55 to 1.60 DM due to the policy moves that have boosted the dollar higher and to the fundamentals that are in its favour, mainly the declining rates of inflation, an improving budget deficit, which has been shrinking for the past two years — it now stands at \$203 billion and the trend is continuing in fiscal 1995 — and slower interest rates abroad. In addition, the situation is improving in Mexico, which had a significant drag on the U.S. economy — with Washington setting aside a \$20 billion package deal early in the year to bail-out the Mexican economy which may have been the catalyst for the dollar's free fall in the first quarter of the year.

The writer is an economist at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The views expressed in the above article, which he contributed to the *Jordan Times*, do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

America is selling Israel as 'gateway' to Middle Eastern markets'

IN THE following article, which he published in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, U.S. Ambassador to Tel Aviv Martin Indyk tells Israelis that some American businesses are beginning to conclude that by establishing a base in Israel, they can open the door to a Middle Eastern market of 300 million people. The article is reprinted from the USIS Wireless File.

I HAVE JUST returned to Israel from a short visit to New York and Chicago. My purpose? To sell Israel to the American business community. Some might think that is the task of an Israeli diplomat but my concern is to lobby American firms to come and make money in Israel. I told them there were great opportunities: Billions of dollars worth of infrastructure projects; Israeli consumers with money to spend and a penchant for American products; and high-tech companies on the cutting edge looking for American investment partners. They were surprised to hear of Israel's \$80 billion GNP, of an economy growing at 8 per cent per annum, of per capita income outstripping that of Spain and Ireland.

Such a plan would have to start by recognising constraints. Israel does not produce much of what the Arabs want to buy. Eventually, the Gulf Arabs may provide a market for Israeli high-tech products, but Israel will face tough competition because the Gulf states can afford to pay for the best from the West. Second, for a long-time to come, Israel's Arab partners will continue to fear Israel's dominance. This is partly because Israel's economy is already larger than all of its Arab neighbours' economies combined. But it is also because of centuries of dominance by outside powers and a legacy of bitterness towards Israel engendered by decades of hostility and conflict. These concerns will fade with time but, in the meantime, they require an approach based on realistic expectations and heightened sensitivity to the fears of Israel's potential partners.

That said, much business potential, however, was the potential of Israel as a gateway to the Middle Eastern market and as a trade and transportation hub between the markets of Europe and the Middle East. To be sure, they are attracted by the unique opportunities now available in a booming economy. But Israel, on its own, represents a market of a mere 5 million people. Alone, it cannot hope to sustain its attractiveness in competition with the newly emerging markets in India, China, and the Far East that are one hundred times as large.

So, when American business looks at Israel, they want to know not only whether they can make money in the short term, but also whether by establishing a base here they can open the door to a much larger Middle Eastern market of 300 million people down the road. For the first time, some of the larger American firms are concluding that the proposition is worth testing.

It is ironic that just as America is exploring the potential of a Western-oriented Israeli gateway to the Middle Eastern market, Israeli business has become disillusioned with the prospect. Put off by Arab concern and continuing Arab worry that Israel might dominate the Middle East

economically, some Israelis have chosen the path of least resistance, leapfrogging the Middle East to take advantage of new opportunities in the Far East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. This has obvious benefits, but it risks forfeiting Israel's long term prospects in the Middle East. A more prudent and productive approach is to try to do both: While exploiting the immediate prospects outside the Middle East, Israel should begin to develop a long-term, patient but purposeful business plan to build economic and commercial relations with its Arab partners in the peace process.

Such a plan would have to start by recognising constraints. Israel does not produce much of what the Arabs want to buy. Eventually, the Gulf Arabs may provide a market for Israeli high-tech products, but Israel will face tough competition because the Gulf states can afford to pay for the best from the West. Second, for a long-time to come, Israel's Arab partners will continue to fear Israel's dominance. This is partly because Israel's economy is already larger than all of its Arab neighbours' economies combined. But it is also because of centuries of dominance by outside powers and a legacy of bitterness towards Israel engendered by decades of hostility and conflict. These concerns will fade with time but, in the meantime, they require an approach based on realistic expectations and heightened sensitivity to the fears of Israel's potential partners.

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developing high quality and high tech medical services and medical products for the region and the world.

Third, Israel can take positive actions to close infrastructure gaps that will enable the Middle East to take off as a regional business unit. Transportation, air, sea and land links must be planned and executed to facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services within the region and to extra-regional markets.

Telecommunications capabilities and services, essential to global business, are badly in need of upgrades and integration. Reliable and cheap electric power, good water and sewage systems, modern office complexes and industrial parks — all these are areas where regional projects make sense.

Israel and her neighbours have unique and world class natural, cultural, historical and religious sites that cry out for regional development. Long divided by the politics of the last century, a regional vision may restore to tourists something of the field of Nabataea, Petra, of Roman Bet She'an, of Alexandria, Jerash, Samson's Gaza, and the Crusader's Caesarea and Akko. The coral reefs in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea need development on new tourist facilities from hotels and restaurants to museums and nature centres. Because of its modern airport facilities, and new facilities like the Arava International Airport already in the planning stages, Israel could become a hub for regional visitors interested in archaeological, cultural, and eco-tourism. Here Israel will also need to help its neighbours realise tourism's full potential.

Finally, Israel can use its existing free trade arrangements with the United States and the European Union in concert with emerging bilateral and regional trade agreements to ensure that the products of joint ventures enjoy duty-free access to the West's huge markets. In the long term, Israel and her neighbours will need to tap complementary capabilities to facilitate the flow of goods and services. Tariff barriers will need to be steadily reduced to allow fair, free market competition. Israel can lead the way in developing regionally based industries housed in free trade zones which target

world markets. On the horizon before us is a major opportunity to lay the groundwork for this overall approach. On October 29-31, King Hussein of Jordan will host the Amman Economic Summit. Senior executives from more than 700 corporations from all over the Middle East and all over the world will come together to discuss the opportunities that can be created to do business together. Unlike last year's inaugural Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit in Casablanca, this summit will be specially tailored to meet the needs of business people by helping them make a contact with their potential partners, by briefing them on the opportunities for regional cooperation and by providing them with information on how to do business in the Arab World and Israel.

Israel's role in this regard was driven home to me in New York this week. One of America's largest and most successful financiers told me of an encounter he had with an Israeli and an Egyptian businessman who had come to him to seek backing for a joint venture. What impressed him much more than their interesting business plan was the relationship between them. It was obvious to him that the Israeli understood his Arab partner much better than an American could. This is the essence of the new partnership that can be built between Israel and its Arab neighbours, a partnership for peace and prosperity in which the private sector becomes the engine that pulls the Middle East into the global market of the 21st century.

Features

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

Macroeconomic and structural reforms set Jordan on path of sustained growth – IMF

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund (IMF) recently completed the 1995 Article IV consultation with Jordan and the third review under Jordan's extended fund facility arrangement, approved in May 1994 in support of Jordan's medium-term economic reform programme. The following article, based on a review by an IMF staff team headed by Edouard Maciejewski, with Ahsan Mansur, Patricia Alonso-Gamo, Etienne de Callatay, and John McDermott, reviews recent economic developments in Jordan and its progress with structural reform. It also describes the package of structural reforms aimed at further opening up the economy adopted in early September by the Jordanian Parliament.

Macroeconomic consolidation

In recent years, Jordan has made major progress toward achieving macroeconomic stabilisation and sustained economic growth. Its success in achieving high real growth with continued price stability and a strengthening balance of payments is attributable to the government's stabilisation and reform strategy adopted in the wake of the balance of payments crisis of the late 1980s. The strategy was strengthened further in the aftermath of the August 1990 Middle East crisis, through structural reform and macroeconomic adjustment programmes since 1992. Jordan's adjustment efforts have been supported by a stand-by arrangement from the IMF during 1992-93; since 1994, Jordan has had an extended arrangement from the IMF, sectoral loans from the World Bank, and obtained generous official external debt reschedulings from the Paris Club and bilateral creditors.

Overall, Jordan's macroeconomic performance during 1992-94 has been solid and prospects for 1995 are generally favourable. Real growth, inflation, and fiscal adjustment have been much better than anticipated, and the balance of payments adjustment stronger than targeted under its adjustment programme. After several years of decline or virtual stagnation, economic activity gained considerable momentum in 1992, with real GDP growth exceeding 16 per cent. The pace of economic expansion was sustained during 1993-94, averaging six per cent annually, reflecting mainly strong activity in construction and a solid recovery of agriculture, trade, and manufacturing. The economy's favourable supply response and import prices, coupled with prudent demand management policies, contributed to a sharp deceleration of inflation, to the four-to-five per cent range, during 1992-94. And despite high labour force growth, the unemployment rate declined to 12.15 per cent during 1993-94 from a peak of 25 per cent in 1990.

Jordan's overall fiscal deficit declined to seven per cent of GDP in 1992 (excluding the effect of nonrecurring

revenues) from nearly 18 per cent in 1991. It fell further to less than 6 per cent of GDP in 1994, reflecting the effect of discretionary measures and strong economic growth.

The favourable fiscal results and cautious credit policy stance contained the growth of the net domestic assets of the banking system to less than 8 per cent in 1992. Supported by the improved fiscal position, monetary expansion remained well below the increase in nominal GDP during 1993-94.

On the external front, the current account deficit narrowed by three percentage points to 14 per cent of GDP in 1992, and further by eight percentage points to 6.5 per cent of GDP in 1994. This outcome was attributable to the continuing strong performance of remittances, nontraditional exports — which rose at an annual average rate of 14 per cent in dollar terms during 1992-94 — and a strong recovery of tourism receipts.

These developments, together with larger-than-anticipated transfers of worker savings, brought the overall balance of payments deficits below programme targets in both 1992 and 1993, and gross official reserves exceeded programme targets in both years. In 1994, the reserves position weakened, however, largely reflecting the effect of regional uncertainties resulting from the peace process and the potential redemption of Jordan dinars circulating in the West Bank. Reserves improved significantly in the second half of 1994, in response to a substantial monetary tightening, but remained low relative to the programme target.

Structural reforms

Under its medium-term economic reform programme, Jordan had planned to pursue structural reform in a number of areas, in particular:

- Carry forward the process of structural reforms initiated in late 1988, particularly tariff reform and reform of the indirect tax system — through the introduction of a general sales tax (GST) — and the direct tax system;

- Introduce indirect monetary control and a number of other financial reform measures;

- Move toward external current account convertibility;

- Implement reforms in the agriculture and water and energy sectors; and

- Improve the regulatory framework for domestic and foreign investments.

The tariff reform programme initiated in 1988 was concluded in early 1992, with a further reduction of the maximum tariff rate (by 10 percentage points) to 50 per cent (except for few luxury items). Further progress was made in late 1994: basic tariffs exceeding 50 per cent were reduced to 50 per cent or less (except for three items); as a

result, together with the surcharge and other fees, border taxes were reduced to 70 per cent or less, and the effective tariff rate was cut to 21 per cent.

In June 1994, in order to broaden the domestic tax base and improve the elasticity and efficiency of the tax system, the government replaced the consumption tax system by a GST at the manufacturing and import stages. Its main features included a basic rate of seven per cent and a rate of 20 per cent applying to 30 items (mainly luxury goods), tax credit for inputs to remove cascading of taxes at different stages of production, and a limited list of exemptions.

In September 1993, the authorities began issuing central bank JD-denominated certificates of deposits, as a new indirect instrument of monetary control. Since then, indirect monetary control operations and other supporting reforms have strengthened steadily, with the Central Bank of Jordan implementing monetary policy via a reserve money programme and using an indirect monetary control mechanism to effectively influence domestic interest rates, without resorting to ad hoc and arbitrary use of credit limits. Commercial banks have been responding efficiently to the Central Bank's interest rate policy, which is being pursued through open market operations.

Jordan has also made progress in liberalising its exchange system. Following several steps to liberalise current account restrictions, in February 1995 Jordan accepted the obligations of the IMF's Article VIII, Sections 2, 3 and 4, under which it undertakes to refrain from imposing restrictions on current international transactions or engaging in discriminatory currency arrangements or multiple currency practices without IMF approval.

In the agriculture and water sectors, the authorities abolished control of cropping patterns and reduced the average tariff on agricultural imports to 30 per cent, as part of the reform effort supported by a World Bank agricultural sector adjustment loan. Under the ongoing reform of the energy sector operations supported by a World Bank energy sector adjustment loan, the authorities are seeking to achieve certain financial targets in the operations of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA); and to formulate a restructuring plan for the power sector, including the incorporation of the JEA and establishment of a new oil and gas company. Furthermore, as part of its public sector enterprise reform and privatisation programme, the government has sold a large part of its shares in the Jordan Hotels and Tourism Company, and has completed commercialisation of the Alia Gateway Hotels and duty free shops at the Amman International Airport. The government-owned Telecommunications Corporation is authorising the private sector to provide complementary services; and a strategy to privatise the corporation is

expected to be completed by the end of 1995 with World Bank support.

New reform package

Further progress in structural reform is expected in the near future, following the recent passage by Parliament of a package of medium-term reform measures. The package consists of:

- Several amendments to the GST system;
- A reform of corporate and personal income tax; and
- A new investment law.

The package is expected to be implemented by the time of the Amman economic summit in late October 1995.

The GST policy reform measures include an increase in the basic rate to 10 per cent; extension of the sales tax to services according to an extended positive list; voluntary registration of taxpayers below a certain threshold; and provisions for introducing a supplementary duty on selected luxury products, cars, alcohol and tobacco.

With regard to the direct tax system, the improvements include the elimination of tax holidays (except for investments in less developed areas); limitation of tax deductibility to net interest payments; reduction in the number of tax rates and the maximum tax rates for both personal and corporate income taxes to 35 per cent from 50 per cent; rationalisation of corporate income tax rates, with a view to treating all corporate sectors equally by establishing three flat corporate tax rates of 15 per cent for companies in "encouraged" sectors (mining, industry, hotels and hospitals), 35 per cent for banks and financial institutions, and 25 per cent for all other companies; encouragement of capital accumulation by imposing a withholding tax of 10 per cent on distributed profits; and broadening the tax base by reducing and simplifying exemptions and applying uniform standard deductions for all wage earners.

The new Investment Law replaces both the Encouragement and Investment Law of 1978 and the Law Governing Arab and Foreign Investment Law of 1992. It provides for equal treatment of all investors, eliminate distinction between projects in the same sector, rationalises the incentive structure, and opens the financial market to all investors.

The package is expected to be complemented later this year by a law governing the operations of the Amman Financial Market; further reform measures to deepen the financial markets, and a further tariff reform. Overall, the proposed reforms are consistent with the authorities' medium-term private-sector- and export-led strategy. They should place Jordan in a position to benefit from prospective regional developments and new trade and financial opportunities.

Breakthrough accord hailed

(Continued from page 1)

peace in the Middle East. On behalf of the American people, I want to congratulate the negotiators and their leaders who continued to work and persevere and to prevail over the enemies of peace."

"This is a good day for peace in the Middle East and a good omen for good steps in the future," he told reporters before leaving for a one-day visit to Pennsylvania.

The president said the agreement probably would advance the cause of a comprehensive Middle East peace, but cautioned that experience has taught "to take these things one at a time" and "not to read too much into it."

"But I feel quite good about this, this was a major step," he added.

Lebanon and Syria are the only remaining hold-outs in the Middle East peace process.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Mr. Arafat had called him to report the successful conclusion of the agreement as provided for in the 1993 Israel-PLO peace accord.

"I know from our intensive work with the parties that this has not been an easy process," Mr. Christopher said in a statement.

"What Israelis and Palestinians have achieved is a remarkable tribute to their courage and determination and to the power of direct negotiations to resolve extremely complex problems."

The agreement is more than a year overdue under the timetable envisioned in the Israel-PLO declaration of principles signed two years ago in Washington.

Norway praised the initialing of Israel-PLO agreement on Sunday as a decisive step forward in the implementation of the landmark peace pact negotiated secretly in Oslo two years ago.

"The Norwegian government welcomes the historic new Israeli-Palestinian accord to expand Palestinian rule into the West Bank," Foreign Minister Bjoern Tore Godal said.

"The agreement testifies to a great political determination and represents a decisive step forward in the implementation of the Oslo agreement," he said in a statement.

Norway brokered talks between Israel and the PLO that led to the 1993 deal for gradual Palestinian autonomy.

"The international community must now lend its support and contribute to the

successful implementation of expanded Palestinian self-government," Mr. Godal added.

Mr. Godal sent congratulatory telegrams to Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres, who shared the 1994 Nobel Peace prize with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for achieving the peace accord.

British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind hailed the initialing of the PLO-Israel agreement and praised both sides for compromising.

"I applaud the efforts of all those involved in this major achievement in the peace process. I recognise the difficult compromises made on both sides," he said in a statement.

"I look forward to signature of the agreement and to Palestinian elections. The U.K. will be playing a significant role in European Union-organised monitoring of the elections," Mr. Rifkind said.

Britain has pledged £83 million (\$130.8 million) in aid to the Palestinians over three years and Mr. Rifkind said: "We stand ready to boost our aid when the economic requirements of the new phase are clear."

France called the Israel-PLO accord an important step towards peace.

"France is extremely pleased by this good news," Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette said in a statement.

King delivers address

(Continued from page 1)

the World Bank and the IMF.

The King and Queen were seen off by Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan, Princess Sarvath, and Princess Basma and other members of the Royal family.

Also to bid farewell to the King and Queen at the airport were Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi and other officials as well as the French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Baulet.

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"We hope the agreement will be quickly confirmed by the two parties."

"We salute the determination and desire to succeed displayed by the negotiators," Mr. De Charette said. "This is an important step toward peace."

Mr. De Charette said he hoped the accord meant Palestinian elections would now quickly be set for four months from now, and said the European Union would coordinate their supervision.

"The international community must now, more than ever, work together so that Palestinian autonomy succeeds. France can be counted on to help the Middle East and Mediterranean become a region of peace, cooperation and development," he said.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said the agreement initialled in Taba, "after the declaration of principles of 1993 and the deal on Gaza and Jericho in 1994, the third important step on the road to peace and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians."

"The two sides have concluded ... a new agreement despite considerable resistance and difficulties."

Mr. Kinkel also praised the roles of Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat for their "constant and courageous readiness for compromise."

What's in a (maiden) name?

Japan's women hope it's equality

By Kevin Sullivan
and Mary Jordan

TOKYO — Michiko Niizeki, a taxi driver, lit up like Las Vegas. "Really?" she said, beaming. "That's great!"

Mrs. Niizeki had just heard the news: The Japanese government plans to allow married couples to use different last names.

"I think this will make a tremendous contribution to women's status and independence," said Mrs. Niizeki, 40, who said she doubted she would go back to using her maiden name but was delighted by the notion that she soon could if she wanted.

Social norms in Japan change gradually, caught under the weight of thousands of years of tradition. The government is usually the last to shift.

In recent years, a growing number of women have been using their maiden names — while technically following the law by registering their marriage under their husband's name. Now popular momentum to do away with this semi-outlaw status for women has finally put enough pressure on lawmakers to change the rules.

The status of women in Japan is a matter of much debate. According to the prime minister's office, the number of women holding positions in political, administrative, judicial and other key areas has nearly doubled in the past decade.

In the Diet, or parliament, for example, female membership rose to 6.8 per cent in 1995 from 3.6 per cent in 1984. Those who believe women are gaining status and power in Japanese society tout such statistics as proof. Critics look at the

same numbers and see 6.8 per cent of parliament as patently low for one of the world's great industrial powers.

A report released in Beijing this month at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women noted that the ratio of women to men in the Japanese parliament was the lowest among the 25 most advanced nations of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Women make up 10.3 per cent of the U.S. Congress.

In Japan, there are some score here that the Japanese delegation to the Women's Conference was led by a man, Koke Nosaoka, the chief cabinet secretary. The Japanese government wanted the delegation to be led by a cabinet minister, all 21 of whom are men.

"Although Japan is said to be an economic superpower, it is far from being a society where equality between men and women is observed," the newspaper Asahi Shimbun said in an editorial this month.

The editorial noted that less than 1 per cent of management positions in the central government were held by women. And it said that women college students entering the work force still

faced discrimination in wages and employment.

Also, although the number of women who work has greatly increased in recent years, many of the jobs are part-time positions or low-paying jobs. And now that economic times have turned sour, women are often the first to be let go.

The traditional structure of working husbands and stay-at-home wives still predominates here. In fact, a common Japanese word for "my wife" translates literally into English as "in the house." But with the recent recommendations, many women here feel that they have taken another small step forward.

"I think this is great," said Yasuko Otsuka, 24, a student. "Men and women are not equal; men are always at an advantage."

Naoko Otani, 18, a high school student, said: "I don't think we should have to change our name. I want to be treated the same as a man." Miss Otani said she wanted to go to college and keep her name and her career even after marrying. She said she was grateful that women her age had more options than were available to her mother's generation.

The proposals were issued in a report by a panel appointed by the Justice Ministry and will be presented to parliament early next year. The rules are believed to represent a consensus position that will easily pass.

The report also recommended changes in divorce law that women's advocates saw as significant. A married person who has lived apart from his or her spouse for more than five years could sue for divorce, even if they have been separated for decades.

Also, a woman must now wait six months after her divorce before re-marrying, while men may remarry immediately. That waiting period is believed to allow time to determine if the woman is pregnant by her ex-husband. The proposals would shorten the waiting period to 100 days — which some women's advocates see as encouraging, but still unequal.

As a whole, the proposals are a big step forward for women, said Mariko Fujiiwara, a research director at the Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living in Tokyo.

The Washington Post

Israel, PLO initial accord

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the initialing ceremony in a Taba hotel where they spent nine consecutive days.

"It's history in the real meaning

Economy

UAE warns of fresh oil price crisis

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE), one of the biggest oil producers in the world, has warned crude prices could collapse unless independent producers heed OPEC calls for cooperation.

In a commentary on the conference between world oil producers and consumers in Venezuela, the official news agency WAM said a recent improvement in crude prices might not continue and they could tumble this year.

"It seems that the recent increase in oil prices will not last for long, especially in the absence of understanding between producers in Venezuela on the need to cooperate to stabilise production in order to support prices and prevent a repetition of the 1986 price crisis," it said.

"Expectations by experts and analysts indicate that oil prices could continue to rise until October before they sharply decline towards the end of the year due to several factors, including high output by non-OPEC producers," WAM added.

Oil prices plummeted to below \$10 in 1986 in a production war between key oil states, sharply depressing the revenues of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and hurting the economies of most producers.

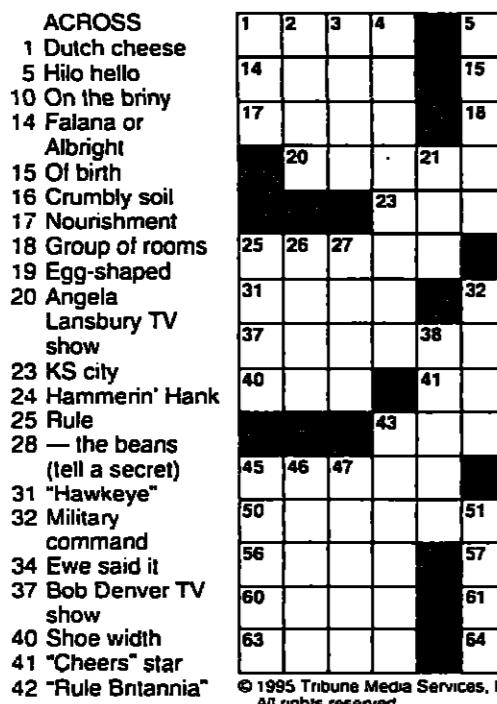
Arab Gulf states were harmed most as they are the biggest oil bloc in the world and their crude exports provide the bulk of their income.

Although oil prices have recovered from their 1986 level and a similar crisis in 1988, they are still far below the \$21 floor targeted by the 12-nation OPEC. So far this year, they have averaged around \$17.

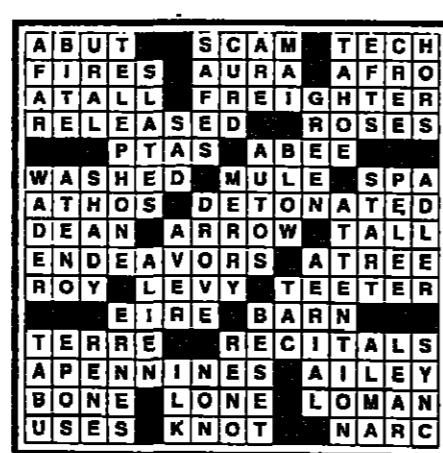
Qatari Oil Minister Abdulah Al Ateyya said before flying to Venezuela Thursday that current oil prices were low and he blamed outside producers.

WAM singled out North Sea producers Britain and Norway, whom it said had negatively affected the market because of their continued output rises. It echoed OPEC oil producers, who have criticised the two European states for failing production and rebuffing calls for coordination.

THE Daily Crossword by George Urquhart



Yesterday's puzzle solved:



'No flow of Iraqi crude oil to Palestinian territories'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) request for U.N. Sanctions Committee exemption for planned imports of Iraqi oil to the Palestinian autonomous territories had been turned down, informed sources said Sunday.

The report of the rejection contradicted a report in the local press that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was expecting Iraqi oil to flow to the self-rule territories starting next month.

According to the sources, the PNA, based in the Gaza Strip, had filed an "informal" request to the Sanctions Committee in New York for an unspecified quantity of crude oil per day from Iraq, trucked overland through Jordan.

"Before the issue was formalised, the U.S. made it clear to all other members of the Sanctions Committee that the request should not be entertained, at least not for the time being," said an informed source. "As a result the issue was shelved."

The Sanctions Committee comprises representatives of all members of the United Nations Security Council.

Palestinian sources confirmed that the PLO request for permission for imports of Iraqi oil was made but asserted that it initially had the endorsement of the Clinton administration, which changed its mind last month.

According to a Palestinian ter-

ritories do not have a refinery. A group of businessmen has been discussing a refinery project at a cost of about \$400 million.

According to the Palestinian source, one option was to use Jordan's sole refinery at Zarqa, which has an installed capacity to refine up to 100,000 barrels per day but is using only half of that.

"This would mean Iraq trucking an additional 35,000 b/d to Zarqa for refining and Jordanians reshaping the refined product to the Palestinian territories," said the source.

Sources at the refinery declined comment.

Another option, said another source in the PLO, was to use Israeli refineries.

Mohammad Zuhdi Nashashibi, the minister of finance in the PNA, which administers the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jeniche since May 1994, was quoted in the local press as saying that Palestinian-Israeli talks were under way on the issue.

The local reports also quoted Mr. Nashashibi as saying in an interview with the Jerusalem-based Al Quds Press that the U.S. had approved the PNA's request to the Sanctions Committee.

According to Mr. Nashashibi, the PNA was also studying oil imports from other sources and was negotiating the purchase of natural gas from Qatar. No independent confirmation was available of the comments.

"On the whole, the near-

U.S. Senate tightens rules on PLO

From the *Jerusalem Post*

THESENATE last week tightened requirements that the PLO must fulfill in order to continue receiving U.S. assistance.

The new rules are contained in a \$12.3 billion foreign assistance bill that the Senate passed overwhelming, 91-9.

The House in July passed its own bill, and the two bodies are scheduled to reconcile their bills Wednesday.

U.S. President Clinton must sign the new bill into law by Saturday, when the U.S. fiscal year ends. The \$12.3b represents a 10 per cent drop from this year's outlay.

Toby Dershowitz, a

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

authority (P.A.) cease funding its offices in Jerusalem within six months;

* That the PLO provide the U.S. with information on U.S. nationals known to have been held at any time by the PLO" or its factions;

* That no terrorist may become a member of the P.A.;

* And that the PLO Covenant be altered soon after the elections for the Palestinian council.

The second item appeared to be a reference to MIA Zacharia Baumel, whom Mr. Helms referred to on the floor as an American-Israeli soldier.

The revised MEPPA will remain in effect for one year. It had originally been drafted to last 18 months, but Mr.

Helms said he concurred with members of the House who preferred the law be revisited sooner.

The foreign aid aspect of the bill contains Israel's \$3b in earmarked military and economic assistance, as well as more than \$2b for Egypt. Israel will receive an additional \$80 million to resettle refugees from the former Soviet Union.

One amendment adopted will also provide \$100m in military "drawdown," or surplus supplies, to Jordan, as a reward for having concluded peace with Israel.

The bill also stipulates that Israel will now be allowed to purchase military items from American companies at prices not to exceed what the Pentagon already pays.

Greenspan optimistic about economy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve (Fed) Chairman Alan Greenspan, delivering an upbeat assessment of the U.S. economy, said Friday the nation appears to have avoided recession and is headed for faster growth.

Testifying before the Senate Banking Committee and just days before the central bank is to consider action on interest rates, Mr. Greenspan said inflation is under control and the latest evidence is "consistent with a firmer pace of economic growth."

He cited a pickup in factory production, modest improvement in the labour market and solid consumer spending as signs the economy is in good shape. "On the whole, the near-

term prospects for the U.S. economy have improved in recent months," he said.

Mr. Greenspan's comments were closely watched by financial markets in anticipation of next Tuesday's meeting of the Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee.

The panel, which cut a key short-term interest rate on July 6 and has remained on the sidelines since, is not expected to cut rates at next week's meeting.

Mr. Greenspan said nothing in his prepared testimony to dispel the widely held view that the economy has rebounded sufficiently without any further stimulus from lower interest rates.

"Inflation risks have receded, and, as a consequence, the threat of severe recession has declined," Mr. Greenspan said.

Inflation actually has improved since earlier this year, but continued, and there are no warning signs on the horizon.

The Federal Reserve, seeking to squelch inflation, engineered a series of seven

could be some clouds on the horizon.

"The outlook is not without concern," he said. "Firms' desired inventory levels are extremely difficult to gauge and the remaining adjustment process could play out more negatively than we anticipate."

Businesses have reduced inventory growth this year as consumer spending has eased from the booming pace of last year. Analysts said the reduction in stockpiles likely will be completed soon and expected moderate gains in production ahead.

"One could not expect the transition to a more sustainable growth path to be entirely smooth," Mr. Greenspan said. "Attempts to control inventories triggered cutbacks in orders and output that, in turn, depressed employment and income in the spring."

The Fed is seeking a growth rate of about 2.5 per cent. In the second quarter this year, the economy expanded at less than half that pace — growing at a 1.1 per cent annual rate.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Astrological Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study letters and reports well so that everything is clear and correct in your mind. Make sure pressing bills are paid.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be sure you understand some material matter well before you commit yourself to it. Study advice from a financial expert.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure that you dress ideally and use appropriate language. Steer clear of a friend who is trying to use you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are not certain just how to handle a close tie, but try to alleviate tension which has built up between you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You had a plan by which to gain a personal wish today, but something came up and you have to use a different angle.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be sure you know what higher-ups expect of you and follow directives to the letter. Be more cognizant of civic duties.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be sure you handle a credit affair wisely or you will find it can be more costly later today. Avoid flamboyant newcomers.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be careful in shopping that you do not get short-changed today and keep your wallet safe. Listen with care to your mate.

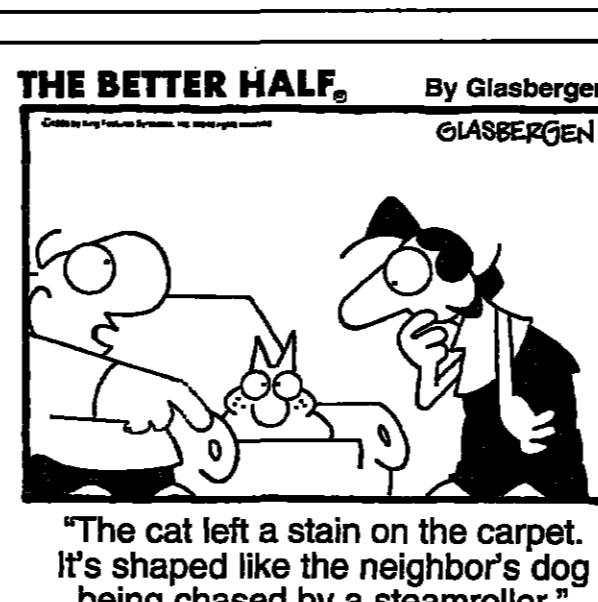
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have to be more direct in stating your ideas so that you get better results in dealing with others.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get your tasks completed in a most meticulous fashion today, whatever they may be, and try not to make any mistakes.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be sure that you count the cost today before you get into some amusement and be sure you can afford it.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You had better change your attitude at home and avoid a possible disagreement with kin. Harmony is the keynote today and tonight.

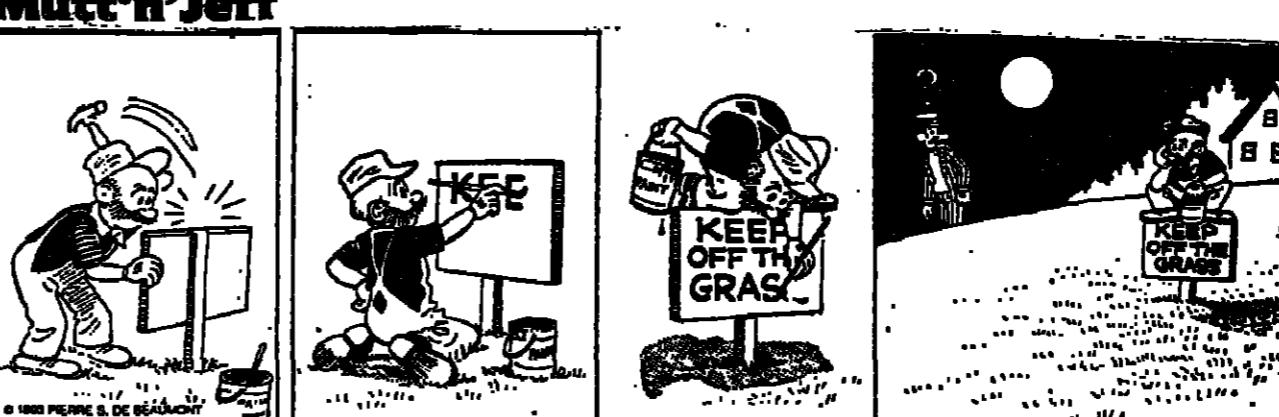
Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli



Andy Capp



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Business & Finance

Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

'Care' backs 'Soft'

THE ARAB Investment and International Trade, the company that manufactures the Care brand of sanitary paper, voiced support for the stand taken by the Soft brand manufacturer and demanded that prices of second grade sanitary paper, used by most people, be floated. The company said it would stop commercial production and would limit its sales to the two corporations serving civil servants and military personnel to honour past contracts made with these two institutions. The company would not send its staff on unpaid leave but would rather accommodate them at the soap or liquid cleansing production lines. Blasting the Ministry of Supply for the study it is doing, the company said that whatever the recommendation would be it would not solve the problem because the prices in the study were old and no longer reflect the current situation. "If the ministry insists on the prices it would arrive at, then it (the ministry) has our authority to buy as the raw material and only then we shall accept the prices," the general manager of the company said. He added that the ministry was told that the bases for its study were illogical and unfair and that the price structure should cover no less than six months in the future but the ministry decided to follow traditional standards that were unreal.

(Al Aswag)

Businesses have a

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Pierce grabs Nichirei title

TOKYO (AP) — Mary Pierce, who shocked Arantxa Sanchez Vicario at the Australian Open final, repeated her excellent performance to wrest the singles title from the Spaniard at the Nichirei Women's Tennis Tournament here on Sunday.

The 20-year-old Canadian born French number one, playing her first final since losing to world number one Steffi Graf in Paris in February, survived a battle of hard-hitting strokes to demolish the Spanish titleholder 6-3, 6-3.

"I think I did everything perfect today. Arantxa is a tough player to beat. I have to be on top of my game to beat her and today I was. I'm very happy with the way I performed today," said a jubilant Pierce.

Pierce stood firm in her service games to take a 4-1 lead with a service break in the fourth, executing an array of thundering forehand winners.

Sanchez Vicario converted a triple break point in the seventh to trail 3-4, thanks to a Pierce forehand error.

But Pierce never hesitated to attack. She charged hard to the net hitting a lot of deep, powerful strokes and smashed her way through to break serve in the following game before serving out for the set.

Sanchez Vicario recovered from being a break down in the second set to tie it at three-all, but when her sliced backhand hit the top of the

net and inched back onto her side at 30-40 to leave her 3-4 down she went on to lose the following two games, and the match.

"This year, probably I've been trying to come to the net more, I've been practising a lot since last winter. It's a very new and important addition to my game, because I don't want the girls to get used to me and my game," said Pierce.

Sanchez Vicario for her part pointed out the difference of conditions as the removable roof of the centre court was closed due to steady rain.

"Here, the ball was much faster than yesterday and it was probably better for her," said Sanchez Vicario.

"She probably hits the ball harder than anybody else right now except Monica (Seles). I tried to mix up the game, but it was completely different because the court was much faster," the Spaniard added.

With the win, Pierce reduced her lifetime record against Sanchez Vicario to three wins against four defeats in major tournaments.

It was also her second title of the season, following her first Grand Slam victory at Melbourne, and seventh overall, earning herself the winner's check of \$79,000.

Sanchez Vicario, runner-up in the first three Grand Slam events of the season, had to be satisfied with the runner-up prize of \$35,000.



France's Mary Pierce (right) holds her trophy after winning over defending champion Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain in the \$470,000 Nichirei women's tennis tournament in Tokyo (Reuters photo)



Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona signs autographs on an album for his young South Korean fans in a Seoul soccer stadium, where he is training (Reuters photo)

Maradona fails to turn up for children's class

SEOUL (R) — About 1,000 South Korean children and their parents waited in vain for Argentine star Diego Maradona to turn up and give a soccer class on Sunday.

"Why did the (football) association invite such a rude player?" asked one angry father after Maradona failed to arrive. "I and my kid have been waiting for many hours to see him."

On Saturday, Maradona had turned up two hours late to see thousands of South Korean fans who had been waiting in the rain to get a glimpse of him.

Maradona, who led Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup, was banned from playing for 15 months after he failed a dope test during last year's World Cup finals in the United States.

The recently-built Luis Carlos Galan track was formally inaugurated on Monday for use during the World Championship, which begins on Monday at the Luis Carlos Galan cycle track on the western outskirts of Bogota.

Dr. Edwin Ruiz, who operated on Sulipe late on Friday at Bogota's Neurological Institute, said he suffered a fractured vertebra and had lost all use of his legs.

"His situation is bad," Dr. Ruiz said in a telephone interview. "He can move absolutely nothing in his legs."

Dr. Ruiz said members of Sulipe's family were due to arrive in Colombia late on Saturday and added he would be flown home for medical attention in France within the next few days.

The recently-built Luis Carlos Galan track was formally inaugurated on Monday for use during the World Championship, which will take place in Colombia's mountainous central Department of Boyaca as well as Bogota.

The track was named after a leading presidential candidate who was assassinated at a political rally in August 1992.

Retaining the yellow jersey — 4:22. The Spaniard completed the 6-kilometre time trial around Alcala de Henares in 49 minutes, 37 seconds, 1:04 ahead of Johan Bruyneel and 1:19 ahead of countryman Melchior Mauri. The victory gave Olano all three times trials in the Vuelta, but left him little chance of catching Jalabert in Sunday's final 171.2 km leg into Madrid.

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DAVIS CUP ROUNDUP

Russians edge Germans in doubles

LONDON (AP) — Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Andrei Olshevskiy outlasted Boris Becker and Michael Stich in a five hard-fought sets Saturday to cut the Germans' lead to 2-1 and keep alive Russia's chance of gaining the Davis Cup final.

Kafelnikov and Olshevskiy triumphed 7-6 (7-3), 6-4, 2-6,

6-7 (7-5) 7-5 Moscow. Sampras plays Mats Wilander in the day's second match. If the Swedes can beat both Agassi and Sampras tomorrow, my hat is off to them," U.S. coach Tom Quilligan said.

Agassi, the No. 1 player in the world, was installed as a 6-1 favourite by this city's oddsmakers over Enqvist, whom he lost to in Philadelphia earlier this year but easily beat in their last two matches.

Despite losing the first two sets, Becker and Stich had a chance to clinch a place in the final when they overcame the Russians' advantage and led 4-2 in the final set.

But Kafelnikov and Olshevskiy broke Becker's serve for 4-4 and the Russians won the match when Stich netted a backhand.

Ranked sixth in the world, Kafelnikov can tie the match with a victory over the fourth-ranked Becker on Sunday. The second reverse singles has Andrei Chesnokov, a four-set loser to Becker on Friday, against former Wimbledon champion Stich.

The other semifinal was between the United States and Sweden in Las Vegas. Stefan Edberg and Jonas Bjorkman rolled to a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Todd Martin and Jonathan Stark on Saturday, giving Sweden life but leaving the Americans with a 2-1 lead in their Davis Cup semifinal.

The defending champion Swedes still have a struggle, with top-ranked Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras scheduled for Sunday's reverse singles.

"A lot of things can happen," Edberg said. "We won the match we needed to win."

Agassi, playing in his hometown, gets the first chance to give his team the semifinal win when he meets

India's Leander Paes and

Thomas Enqvist in a late morning match on the outdoor court at Caesars Palace. Sampras plays Mats Wilander in the day's second match.

"If the Swedes can beat both Agassi and Sampras tomorrow, my hat is off to them," U.S. coach Tom Quilligan said.

Zimbabwe's Byron and Wayne Black, who both played for the University of South Carolina, beat Cyril Suk and Daniel Vacek in the doubles and cut the Czechs' lead to 2-1. The black brothers twice trailed and needed 2 hours 58 minutes to win the match 1-6, 6-3, 6-6, 6-2, 8-6.

Switzerland 3, New Zealand 0

Former French open doubles champions Jakob Hlasek and Marc Rosset downed Kiwi duo Steven Downs and Alastair Hunt 7-6 (7-5), 6-1, 6-1 to seal the win with Sunday's reverse singles still to play. Hunt was called up at the last minute when Jamie Greenhalgh withdrew because of an ankle injury and Downs played when New Zealand No. 1 Brett Steven aggravated a leg injury in his opening singles match.

France 3, Morocco 0

Arnaud Boetsch and Guy Forget teamed to win the doubles and give France an insurmountable 3-0 lead.

Boetsch and Forget beat Hicham Arazi and Younes El Aynaoui, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 in less than 90 minutes.

Belgium 3, Norway 0

Filip de Wulf and Dick

Norman teamed to beat Bent Ove Pedersen and Christian Ruud 7-6 (7-3), 6-1, 6-4, giving the Belgians an unbeatable 3-0 lead.

In group relegation and promotion matches

Israel 5, Slovenia 0

Israel, already sure of victory, completed a shutout of Slovenia. Noam Behr downed Lutz Bozic 6-3, 7-6 (11-9) and Eyal Erlich overpowered Borut Ulrich 7-6 (7-5), 6-7 (8-6), 6-0.

Taiwan 3, Hong Kong 0

Chen Chin-Jung and Hung Chia-Hsi clinched victory for Taiwan, beating Sven Koehler and Thorsten Poelzl 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-7 (6-3), 6-3.

Romania 2, Portugal 1

Down 2-0 from singles play in Estoril, Portugal hit back to win the doubles. Emanuel Couto and Joao Cunha e Silva triumphed 6-4, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7-3) over George Cosac and Andrei Pavel, numbers three and four on the Romanian team.

China 2, Uzbekistan 1

In Tashkent, Pan Ying and Shiya Dzhia Ping rallied from an error-filled fourth set to overpower Oleg Ogorodov and last-minute replacement Vadim Kutzenko and give China a 2-1 lead with a 3-6, 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 6-0 victory.

Philip de Wulf and Dick

Jonathon Stark of the U.S. team returns a shot in a doubles match during the Davis Cup at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas (Reuters photo)

Cyclist paralysed in Colombian accident

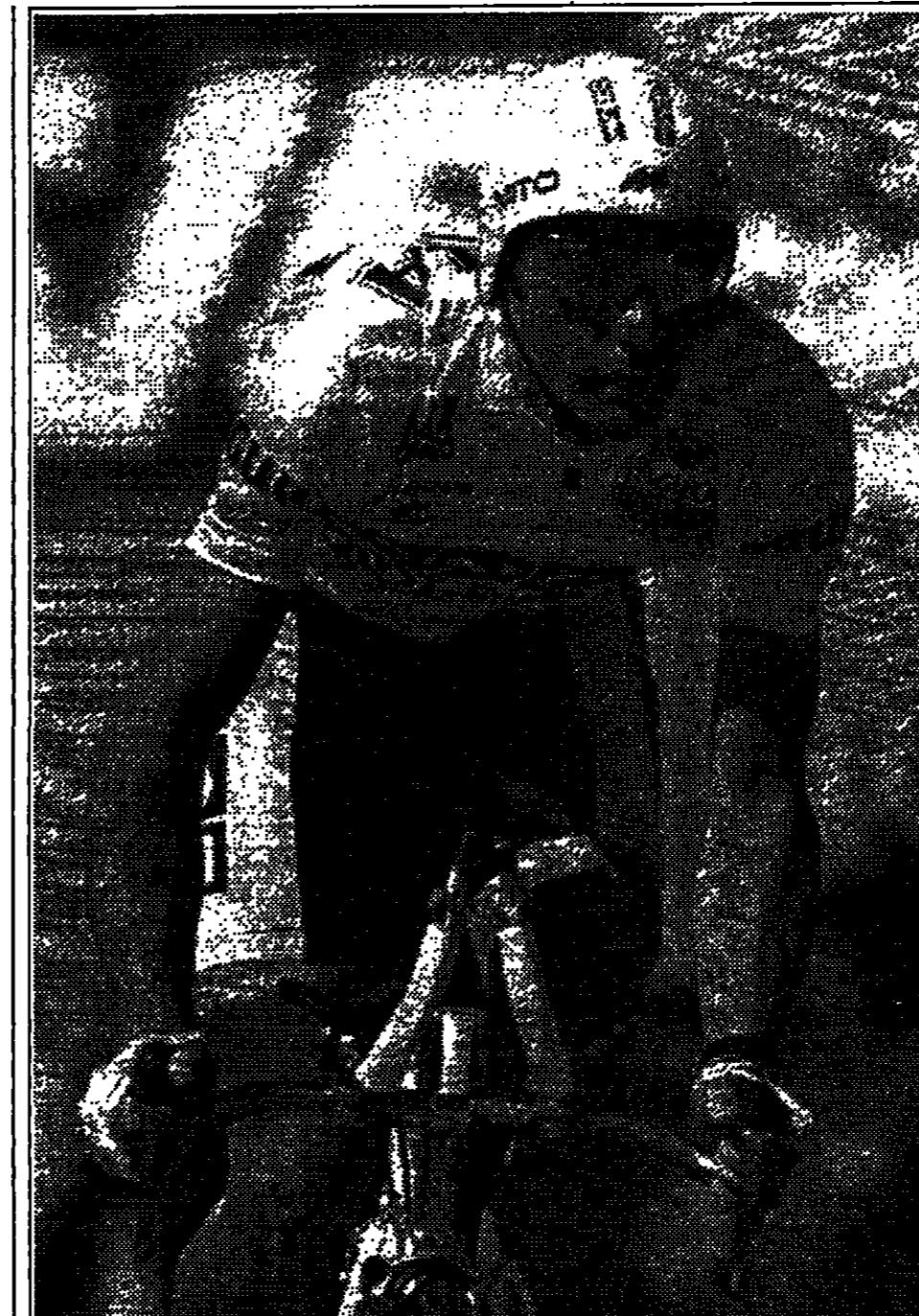
BOGOTA (R) — French cyclist Patrice Sulipe, who was critically injured while training for the upcoming world cycling championships in Colombia, may never walk again, an attending physician said Saturday.

Sulipe, 24, crashed on Friday while practicing for the opening round of the two-week World Championship, which begins on Monday at the Luis Carlos Galan cycle track on the western outskirts of Bogota.

Dr. Edwin Ruiz, who operated on Sulipe late on Friday at Bogota's Neurological Institute, said he suffered a fractured vertebra and had lost all use of his legs.

"His situation is bad," Dr. Ruiz said in a telephone interview. "He can move absolutely nothing in his legs."

Dr. Ruiz said members of Sulipe's family were due to arrive in Colombia late on Saturday and added he would be flown home for medical attention in France within the next few days.



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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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SIMPLE TECHNIQUE COMES THROUGH

Neither vulnerable South deals.

NORTH
♦ 753
♥ 652
♠ 6643
♣ A74

WEST
♦ 952
♥ 983
♠ 1095
♣ K9

EAST
♦ J1094
♥ Q107
♠ 72
♣ J1083

SOUTH
♦ A86
♥ K43
♠ A4Q
♣ Q652

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
Pass Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♦

The correct way to play a particular combination depends on a variety of factors. How many tricks do you need from the suit? How many can you afford to give up the lead?

South's opening bid was the strong, old-fashioned variety showing a balanced 25-27 points. North was more than happy to bring an ace to the combined assets.

West led the jack of diamonds, and declarer could count eight fast

tricks. Barring a 3-3 split in diamonds, most unlikely because of the opening lead, the ninth trick could come only from clubs. Declarer wasted no time in going down. After winning the first trick in hand, declarer led club to the ace and a club back to the king and king.

True, declarer could have made the contract by ducking the second club, but that is Monday-morning quarterbacking. No competent player would attempt such a silly play lest West win that trick with a secondary honor and the suit divided 4-2.

That does not mean, however, declarer played the club suit to best advantage. Since every other suit is still doubly stopped, declarer can afford to give himself an extra chance by leading low club at trick two and raking the suit. The defenders can do no better than win and revere to a diamond. Declarer wins and leads a club to the ace. As the card lies, that picks up the king and the queen is the fulfilling trick.

If nothing else happens, declarer continues with a club to the queen and gets home if the king is with East or if the suit breaks 3-3.

CINEMA TEL: 634144 **CINEMA** TEL: 699238 **CINEMA** TEL: 677420 **AMMOUN THEATRE** TEL: 618274 - 618275 **Nabil Al Mashini Theatre** TEL: 675571 **AHLAN THEATRE** TEL: 625155

PHILADELPHIA Liam Neeson & Jessica Lange in **Rob Roy** Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45 **PLAZA** Mahmoud Yassin / Hussein Fahmi in **NUT SHELL** Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30 **CONCORD CONCORD "1"** Adel Imann & Yusra Birds of the Darkness (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:45 **CONCORD "2"** Police Academy "Mission to Moscow" Shows: 4, 6, 8, 10 **MUSA HIJAZIN "Sumaa" IN Hi Citizen** daily at 8, 30 pm written & directed by Mohammed Shawaqef *****

performances will seize starting of today until further notice **Nabil & Fisham's AHLAN THEATRE presents (Ahlan Tatbee) Welcome Normalisation** Shows start at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call tel. 625155 Amman



Ian Pearce (front) scores with a 'header' in Blackburn's game against Coventry City (Reuters photo)

Manchester United fail to score but go top

LONDON (AP) — Manchester United ended a roller-coaster week by failing to score but clawing to the top of the English soccer standings Saturday with a goal-less tie at Sheffield Wednesday.

A 3-0 loser at home to Division One York in the League Cup on Tuesday, the reds had the saves of Danish goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel to thank for the point that took them to the top.

Schmeichel made stops from Wednesday's imported World Cup stars, Romania's Dan Petrescu and Belgium's Marc Degryse, with his defense in trouble.

Newcastle, which dropped to second, can replace Alex Ferguson's team atop the standings Sunday by beating Chelsea at home.

Next week, Manchester United hosts Liverpool at Old Trafford and Ferguson will be able to recall French star striker Eric Cantona, who has been suspended for eight months over his kung-fu style attack on a Crystal Palace fan last season.

While United failed to score for the second game in a row, there were plenty of goals elsewhere.

BRITISH SOCCER ROUNDUP

Arsenal beat Southampton

4-2. Dennis Bergkamp volleys home from 15 yards in the 17th minute after being set up by Glenn Helder's cross. Tony Adams increased the lead to 2-0 after 23 minutes with a close range header but Gordon Watson's glancing header from Matthew le Tissier's free kick pulled a goal back for Saints a minute later. Ken Monkou headed home Le Tissier's corner in the last few seconds of the first half to tie the game up. Bergkamp's second in the 68th minute was a 3-yard shot that went in off the post and Ian Wright made it 4-2 five minutes later from close range.

Blackburn beat Coventry 5-1. Alan Shearer fired Rovers ahead in the seventh minute, shooting home from close range shot from Tim Sherwood's corner, touched on by Ian Pearce. Colin Hendry gave Blackburn 2-0 lead after 23 minutes. Tim Flowers fouled Peter Ndlovu who hit the 30th minute penalty against the post but the Zimbabwean forward replied for the Sky Blues four minutes

later in the 34th by turning in Paul Cook's centre. Shearer turned home a centre from Mike Newell for his second in the 60th minute and his third came seven minutes later from Newell's headed pass.

Pearce scored the fifth from close range in the 75th after Newell's header bounced back off the post.

Aston Villa appeared headed for the top of the standings until Des Little netted a last minute equaliser for Nottingham Forest in a 1-1 tie in Villa Park. Irish midfielder Andy Townsend fired Villa ahead but was expelled before the game restarted for

apparently making a comment to the referee.

Last place Manchester City tumbled 1-0 at home to promoted Middlesbrough and has only one point from two outings. Next to last Bolton has four.

West Ham defender Julian Dicks, sent off last week for the 10th time in his career, fired home two penalties as the hammers edged Everton 2-1 at Upton Park.

In Division One, Charlton, which gained a 5-4 upset victory at Premier League Wimbledon in the League Cup on Tuesday, hammered another five on the road, this time in a 5-1 victory at Ipswich, a Premier League team only last season.

Bulgarian World Cup goalkeeper Boris Mikhalov made his debut for Division One reading in a 2-2 tie at home to Port Vale.

Four days after being eliminated from the League Cup by Rangers, Celtic replaced its Glasgow rival at the top of the premier division by winning 4-0 at Hearts. Rangers, which had won its first three games, tumbled 1-0 at home to Aberdeen, the only goal coming from a Darren Jackson penalty.

China strengthens domination; Qatar trails in 2nd

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)

— Qatar's Ibrahim Ismail and Sri Lankan Susantika Jayasinghe broke meet records but it was China dominating again Saturday, winning six gold medals to increase their total to 16 at the Asian Athletics Championships.

Bi Zhong started the China romp, tossing the hammer 70.30 metres to his event by more than a metre over Japanese Koji Murofushi (69.24, 227-2).

Double world record holder Wang Junxia also added to the China haul, capturing

the women's 5,000 in 15:25.65, nearly a minute slower than the world record of Portugal's Fernanda Ribeiro (14:36.45).

Other Chinese winners included Ma Wei in the men's discus, Zhang Hengyu in the women's 400, Ren Ruiping in the women's triple jump and Sui Ximie in the women's shot put.

Only Sri Lanka came close to putting up any resistance to the Chinese juggernaut, winning two women's events including Jayasinghe's.

Jayasinghe won the women's 200 in 23.00

seconds, .80 ahead of China's Chen Yanchun.

Shriyani Kulawansha then beat Zhang Yu by .15 seconds in the 100 hurdles, winning in 13.29.

Ismail won his gold and meet record by winning the men's 400 in 44.96 seconds, more than a second ahead of South Korea's Son Ju-il (46.03).

The only other event Saturday was won by A. Aziz Mather, who gave Bahrain its first gold by taking the men's 200 in 20.76 seconds.

China's total of 16 golds is

13 more than the closest nation, Qatar.

More than 700 athletes from 37 countries including former Soviet republics are participating in the five-day championships that conclude Sunday.

In a meeting here Friday night, the council members of the Asian Amateur Athletics Association, decided to hold the next championship in Fukuoka, Japan, in 1998.

The continent's governing body of athletics also selected Suariah to host to the next Asian Junior Athletic Championship in 1997.

South Africa dominates; time for reflection as games end

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — With a dramatic 3-1 soccer victory over hosts Zimbabwe, Egypt won the last gold medal of the All Africa Games on Saturday, trailing South Africa by one medal in the final medals tally.

Back in the sporting fold after years of apartheid-imposed isolation, South Africa held 151 medals, 62 of them gold, to Egypt's 150 with 60 gold, as the games ended.

Nigeria, by far the largest contingent in Harare for the Olympic-style African Championships in 18 sports, was taking home 106 medals, including 36 gold.

South Africa's new challenge to Egypt's traditional dominance, coupled with massive organisational problems in the games, left dispersing athletes and officials with the task of redefining the aims of the continent's biggest sporting championships.

The South Africans, most of them whites, scooped 26 of the 32 gold medals on offer in

swimming events. Their nation will represent the continent in men's hockey at the Atlanta Olympic Games after winning the six-nation Africa Games hockey tournament Saturday, beating traditional powerhouse Egypt.

"We, came here to win medals," said South African team manager Hugo Oliver.

"Our success is due to various reasons, one being sheer dedication."

South Africa, acknowledging that its wealth compared to other African nations provided it with better sporting facilities, has bid to hold the next continental championships in 1999.

"We belong to Africa. We want to be part of Africa," Oliver said.

Zimbabwe, currently reeling under the effects of a second severe drought within four years, spent about 400 million Zimbabwe dollars (\$48 million) to upgrade sports facilities and host some 6,000 athletes and officials from 46 countries.

Caterers said 3,400 of them in the main athletes village set at least one record there, devouring 2,400 kilogrammes of meat a day, and at least 7,500 dozen eggs and 12 tonnes of rice.

With exceptions — notably soccer, boxing, karate and wrestling — many events have been poorly attended, something even President Robert Mugabe has blamed on carelessness, last-minute organisation.

Problems with accommodation, equipment and even race timekeeping prompted Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, to suggest the African Games have become too large.

Jean-Claude Ganga de Congo, head of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa, proposed the programme could be trimmed to about half its 21 sports, mainly to save money for host nations.

But whose event would go?

"This is a big African festival. Everyone should be allowed to take part," said Ibrahim Konate, a basketball official from Senegal.

Wrestling and karate, popularised in Africa by the U.S. World Wrestling Federation TV shows and kung-fu movies, drew large crowds in Harare.

"We like confrontational sports. You can't take them away from the games," said Zimbabwean spectator Lydia Gumbo.

Gymnastics official Neil Native said the games were an important stepping stone towards world competitions. But only nine African countries contested in gymnastics, leaving it vulnerable to cuts.

George Mazhude, head of the Zimbabwe Table Tennis Association, said his minority sport needed more African competitions, not less.

"African sports are still growing and the games are a good opportunity to build up these sports in each country," he said.

finished first in the men's 400 metres in 44.62, another record for the race in South Africa, while Sally Barosio of Kenya easily won the women's 3,000 metres in 9:11.74.

In the women's high jump, Yelena Gulyayeva defeated two South Africans with a leap of 1.88 metres, and James Beckford of Jamaica won the men's long jump with a distance of 8.27 metres.

Philip Spies of South Africa was the lone local victor, winning the javelin with a toss of 77.50 metres.

In ceremonies to launch the competition, Sports Minister Steve Tshwete called the construction of the state-of-the-art stadium "a magnificent achievement," citing the last-minute preparations that had workers labouring all night in the preceding week to lay and paint the synthetic track.

Rated one of the world's top five athletics stadium by the International Amateur Athletics Federation, the oval-shaped outdoor facility with a large video screen will host the 1998 Athletics World Cup.

With South Africa bidding to host the 2004 Olympics at Cape Town, the new invitation was considered a proving ground to show the international Olympic committee the nation's capability to stage major sports events.

Christie breaks 10 seconds in 100m



British sprinter Linford Christie (left) on his way to an Africa 100m record during the All Africa Invitation meeting at the new Johannesburg Athletics Stadium (Reuters photo)

was the fastest run in South Africa, but well off the world record of 10.49 by Florence Griffith Joyner of the United States.

Christie's time in the men's 100 was the third fastest of the year and came at the 1.750-metre altitude in Johannesburg. Fredericks finished second at 10.03, while Emmanuel Tuffour of Ghana came third in 10.11.

Foreigners dominated the first day of competition as expected.

Irina Privalova of Russia gave the crowd its first major cheer of the evening with an easy victory in the women's 100 metres. Her time of 11.01

set," he said.

Nigerian Taiwo Aladefa set an African record in the women's 100-metre hurdles, running 12.87, while compatriot William Eresse won the men's 110-metre hurdles in 13.86, completing a double after his All Africa Games gold medal the previous week in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Another African, Kipremoi Lagat of Kenya, out-sprinted the field in the final stretch to win the men's 800 metres in 1:46.52, while Olabisi Afolabi of Nigeria won the women's 400 metres in 52.37.

Kenyan Samson Kitur was the moment is having a re-

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Bulgaria wins team title

VIENNA, Austria (AP) — Maria Petrova scored a 9.95 in her rope exercise, the last of the day, to share the individual all-around gold medal and help Bulgaria to the team title Saturday at the World Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships.

Petrova performed a near-perfect routine to finish with 39.8 points, and share the top step on the medal podium with Yekaterina Serebryanskaia of Ukraine.

The bronze medal also was shared between Larisa Lukyanenko of Belarus and

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Jordan secures high IMF mark

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has given high marks to Jordan for its adherence to an economic restructuring programme agreed with the IMF and predicted that the Kingdom should be in a position to benefit from the new trade and economic opportunities available in an era of peace.

The IMF also welcomed the recent liberalisation moves adopted by the Kingdom in terms of moves towards privatisation and opening up of the economy and said these steps as well as further measures planned were consistent with the government's medium-term, private sector and export-led strategy for economic growth.

In a report entitled "Macroeconomic and structural reforms set Jordan on path of sustained growth," the IMF said Jordan had in fact positively surpassed the targets set in the economic restructuring programme in terms of real growth in gross domestic product, inflation and fiscal adjustment.

The report, based on a review made by the IMF of the programme, said Jordan's "success in achieving high real growth with continued price stability and a strengthening balance of payment is attributable to the government's stabilisation and reform strategy adopted in the wake of the balance of payments crisis in the late 1980s."

The report, a rare IMF document on Jordan made available to the media since the implementation of the restructuring programme, noted that the Kingdom's economic strategy was "strengthened further in the aftermath of the August 1990 Middle East crisis" — sparked by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait — through "structural and reform and macroeconomics adjustment programmes since 1992."

The report noted that the real GDP growth in 1992 was 16 per cent and averaged around six per cent since then. Inflation has been kept within the four-to-five per cent range during the same period, and, despite high labour growth, unemployment rate has been brought down to 12 to 15 per cent during 1993 from a peak of 25 per cent in 1990.

Other points highlighted in report included:

— Jordan's overall fiscal deficit declined to seven per cent of the GDP in 1992 compared with nearly 18 per cent in 1991.

— Cautious credit policies and good budgetary performance contained the growth of the net domestic assets of the banking system to eight per cent in 1992. Monetary expansion remained well below the increase in nominal GDP in 1993-94.

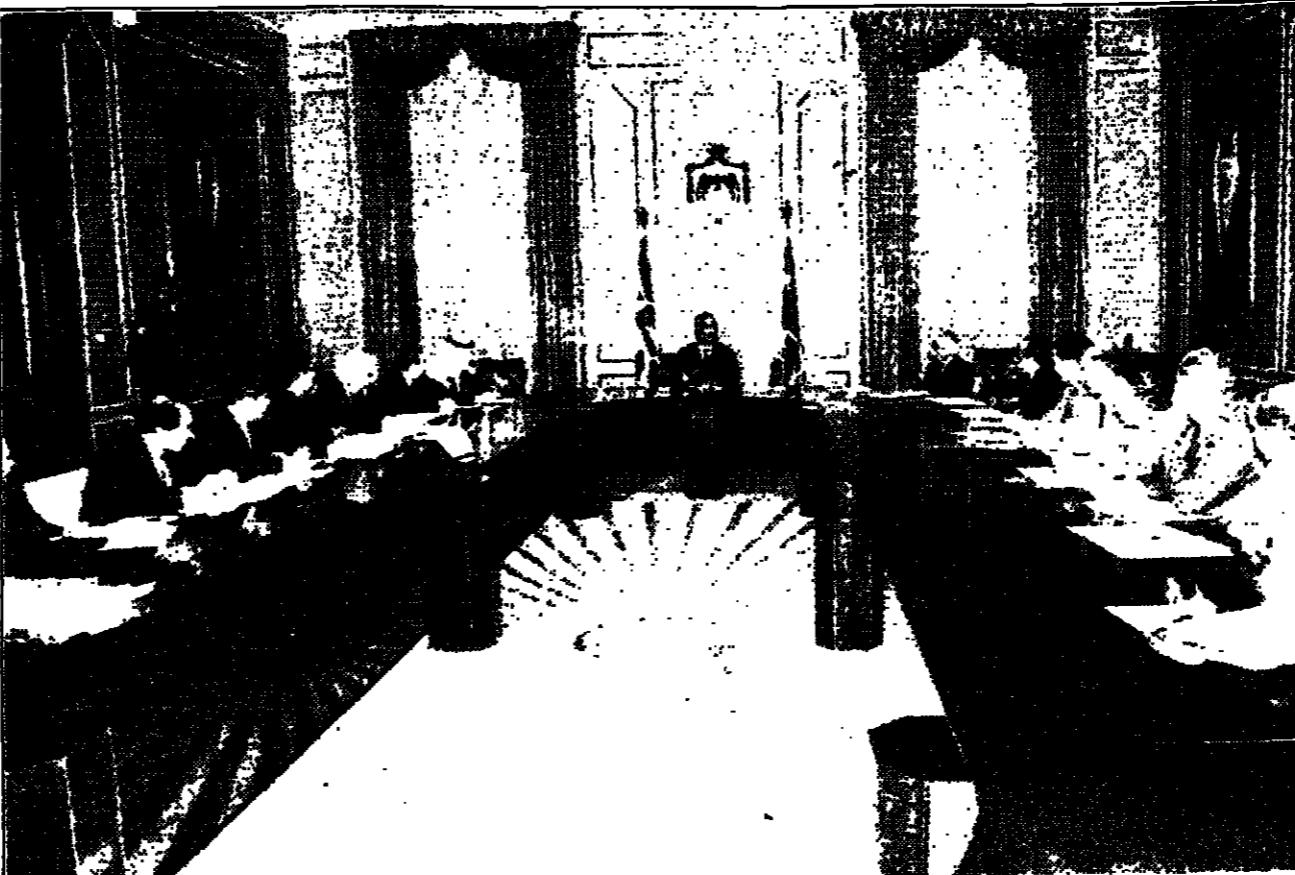
— Current account (external) deficit narrowed by three percentage points to 14 per cent of the GDP in 1992, and further by eight percentage points to 6.5 per cent in 1994. This result was attributed to continuing strong performance of remittances and non-traditional exports.

The IMF report welcomed the reduction in custom duties adopted late last year and the introduction of a general sales tax in mid-1994.

It also paid tribute to the Central Bank of Jordan's prompt move to issue dinar-denominated treasury bonds as "a new indirect instrument of monetary control."

Since beginning of the issuance of the bonds in September 1993, "indirect monetary control operations and other supporting reforms have strengthened steadily, with the Central Bank of Jordan implementing monetary policy via a reserve money programme and using an indirect monetary control mechanism to effectively influence domestic interest rates."

See full text of the IMF report on page 7



MEETING ON ARAB, ISLAMIC MESSAGE: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Sunday chairs a meeting of the Royal Commission on Jerusalem Affairs attended by the committee members, several officials and the secretary-general of the Arab Thought Forum. The meeting dealt with means to foster dialogue between civilisations bases on a system of values and concepts that would help people better understand the Arab and Islamic message through the mass media (Petra photo)

Algeria scoffs at Iranian proposal

PARIS (R) — Algeria lashed out at Iran saying on Sunday it had nothing but scorn for an Iranian proposal for dialogue between Algiers' army-backed government and its militant enemies.

"Algeria brings up its all-out scorn for the talks (proposal) which underlines once again the propensity of Iran's rulers to meddle in others' affairs," the Algerian state-run radio said on Sunday in a commentary.

The statement, carried by the Algerian official news agency and broadcast on Saturday night on Algeria's state-controlled television, appeared to reflect the Algerian government stand.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on Tuesday urged France to bring militants and main opposition parties together with the Algerian government in a dialogue to end almost four years of civil strife in the country which has claimed some 30,000 lives.

Mr. Velayati said his country was ready to join forces with France to launch the initiative.

France's Foreign Minister Hervé de Charlieux politely rebuffed Mr. Velayati's proposal saying it was up to the Algerians to decide ways for dialogue among themselves.

The radio said Mr. Velayati's remarks translate clearly Iran's involvement in organising destabilisation of Algeria through encouragement and material support of international terrorism and armed groups active in the country.

"Algeria replies to the Iranian authorities by demanding that they should first respect the concepts which they are trying to teach Algeria and organise, if they could, a free and legal expression of views by the Iranian citizens," it added.

Algeria cut diplomatic links with Iran two years ago to protest what it called Iranian government backing for militants fighting the secular Algerian government.

Hardliners from both sides assail Israel-PLO agreement

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Hardline Palestinian and Israeli groups denounced the accord to expand Palestinian self-rule initially by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Sunday as a disaster.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) condemned the deal hours before Israeli and PLO officials initiated it after marathon talks between Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"The deal including redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank is worse than the 1993 deal," PFLP spokesman Fahd Al Kudsi said, referring to the accord which led to Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho in May 1994.

"It divides Hebron and the West Bank into Arab gathering points surrounded by Israeli security. These points make Palestinians face a real disaster," he said.

Hebron, where 400 Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Arabs, was major sticking point in the Arafat-Peres talks.

DFLP spokesman Dau'od Talhami said Israel's refusal to remove the settlers from Hebron was a ploy to retain security control over the city and use it as a bargaining chip in future talks over Jerusalem.

"Israelis want Hebron to be a new city of negotiations in the future to blackmail Palestinians. They will want to have Jerusalem in return for giving Hebron to Palestinians," he said.

Mr. Talhami said the agreement did not meet the minimum Palestinian demands and would not be able to achieve peace and security. "It contains many articles that would lead to an explosion in the area," he added.

The spokesman for DFLP, which is led by Nafez Hawatmeh, said the agreement isolated Palestinian towns in the West Bank, leaving them "surrounded by Israeli troops who would punish them for

any unwelcome action."

He said Israeli promises of releasing 2,000 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails was "not a concession because only women and old men would be released."

Mr. Kudsi, whose group is led by George Habash, said: "Time will show that these agreements are but a mirage as they do not solve core issues and address the problem of four million Palestinians living outside their land."

Israeli hardliners vowed to ignore the peace deal expanding Palestinian rule even as Israel and the PLO struggled with the final stage of negotiations.

Former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon of the rightist Likud Party told an emergency meeting of Jewish settlers in the settlement of Kiryat Arba on Saturday night that a future Likud government would not honour an accord with the PLO.

"As it is, definitely not," he told Israel Radio on Sunday.

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres were "conducting a crazy race to achieve an agreement at any price."

Likud gathered enough signatures to hold a special parliament session on the agreement, and demanded that a signing — scheduled for Thursday in Washington D.C. — be delayed until parliament could meet. But leaders of the governing Labour coalition said that would not happen.

The hawkish Sharon, who as defence minister in 1982 led the Jewish state's Lebanon invasion, said Likud could not accept an Israeli handover of parts of the West Bank to the Palestinian authority.

If Likud came to power, he said, it would act to reverse the deal.

"If this government will hand over places such as these to Arafat, the first thing that will be done is to return Jewish control over these areas — in a democratic way and according to the law," he said.

The agreement could not survive while the Jewish state "continued to occupy land and deny rights," it said.

The negotiators have not served the cause of a just and comprehensive peace but everything that goes against it," said the radio's commentator, who added thousands of Palestinians had spilled their blood for their cause.

The agreement could not be accepted after this accord, it predicted.

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